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Vol. CLXVI
No. 2167
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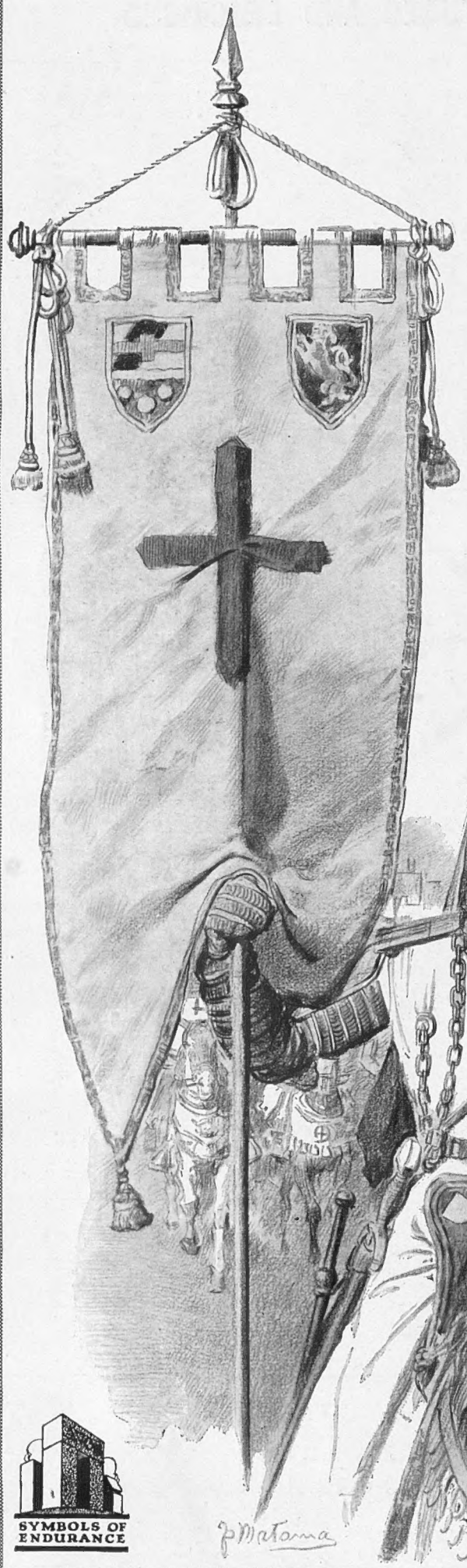

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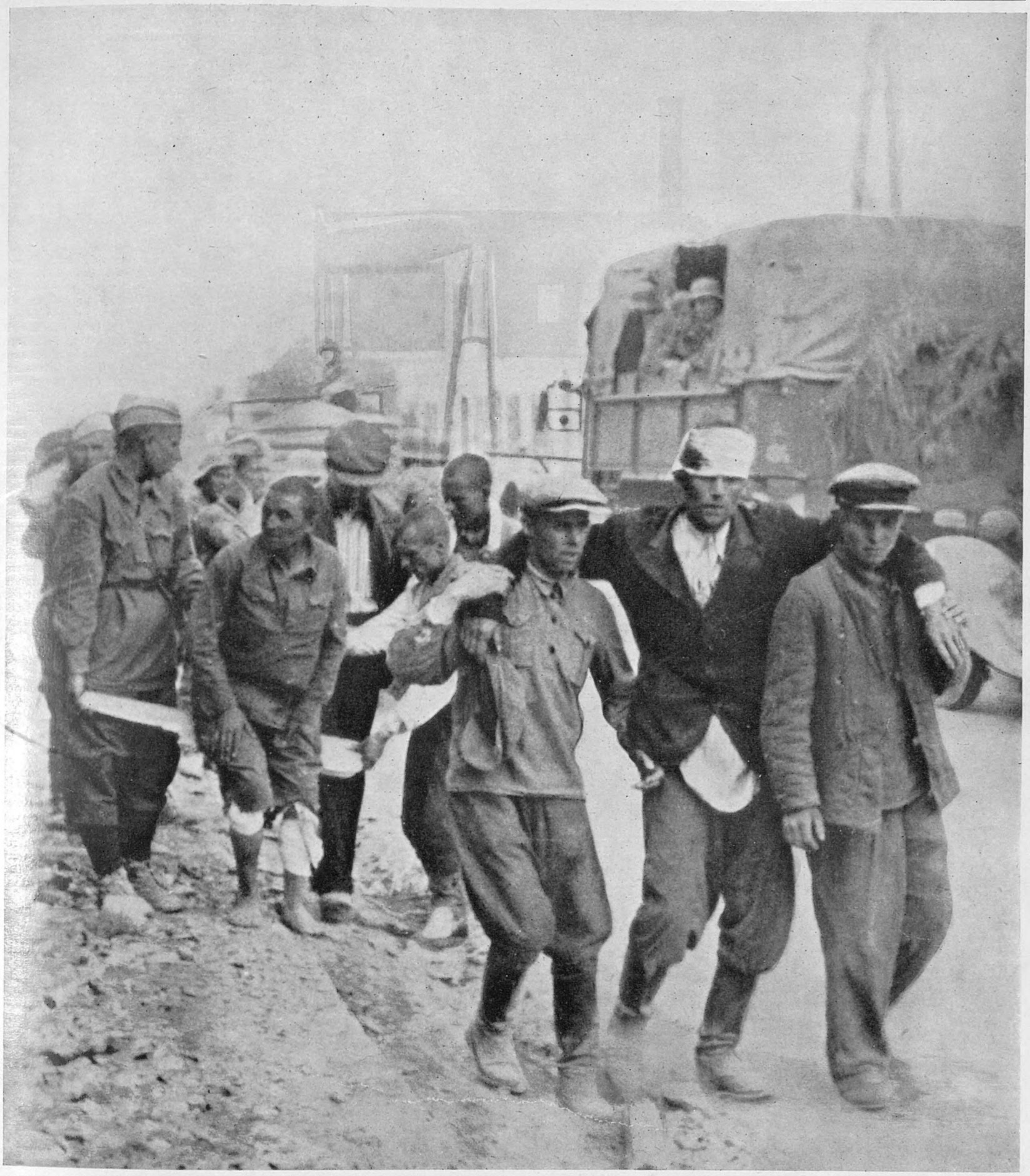

HOW RUSSIA IS WAGING WAR AGAINST THE GERMANS: THE MEN OF THE HEROIC "SUICIDE SQUADS" WHO STEMMED THE FIRST NAZI ONSLAUGHTS BY FIGHTING IN "POCKETS" AFTER THE FIRST GERMAN WAVE HAD PASSED ON

The resistance of the Russians has aroused the admiration of free peoples the world over. It was at first thought that the huge Nazi machine would trample underfoot the Russian peasant-turned-soldier; but far from this being the case, the Red Army has been fighting back everywhere, and it has already been demonstrated that the Germans are not the invincible all-conquering horde that many believed. This picture, which has just reached us from the Russian fighting zone, shows some of the members of Russia's heroic "Suicide Squads": these men were purposely left behind when the main Russian forces withdrew from certain areas in order to hamper the advance of the Nazis by pursuing guerilla tactics in the enemy's rear. Many of these men were wounded, many more were killed, and many were taken prisoner by the Germans—as seen above—after a tremendous resistance. Whilst they were operating behind the enemy's lines they caused great havoc by harassing troop concentrations, cutting communications and otherwise hampering and slowing down the advance

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A WAR NEWSLETTER—No. 100

1, NEW OXFORD STREET, W.C.1.

Night Bombing.—MR. STOKES: "Will the Prime Minister consider making a convention with the German Government for the cessation of night bombing and the bombing of cities?" LORD PRIVY SEAL: "No, Sir." High authority (Mr. Stokes slipped in), including military authority, has more than once described these practices as "*contagious lunacy*." Do you suppose that cool-headed Posterity or cool-headed neutral observers (if any) could conceivably quarrel with this view? Divorced from war expediency, night bombing *is* filthy, barbarous, contagious lunacy, and, if there existed a civilisation common to the nations of the earth to-day, there would not be a single responsible man who would quarrel with the judgment. Civilisation (so called) ought to be ashamed of itself. If I honestly hold an opinion (and if the Editor lets it through), I take pride in publishing it, and I care not a damn for the criticism I receive from readers. I agree with Mr. Stokes that night bombing is the most bestial, hunnish, contagious lunacy on record. But I accept the Privy Seal's "No, Sir"; though not without reservation. I think the Government should be much more brutally honest about its policy of night bombing, which Germans began, and which hitherto they have pursued with the more successful brutality and savagery. I think that, once in a way, the Premier's or Privy Seal's answer to this recurrent question about night bombing conventions should be fuller and more candid: "We shall not seek to end this disgusting barbarism because (1) We did not begin it and would never have begun it; (2) we believe our tortured and bereft citizens desire revenge; (3) it has just begun to pay us more than it pays the Nazis to rain bombs on cities by night and day. It is our strongest weapon in the military, as well as in the economic, and the Atlantic, battles for our survival; (4) we cannot yet compete with the Nazis on land; and night bombing helps us to reduce the risk of a successful invasion of Britain. In short, it is vital to our survival that we now pursue the filthy business; (5) and if we did agree a convention with Hitler, would any man outside Bedlam leave his City dugout and bring his children back to his town and attach the value of a farthing to the latest half-sheet-of-paper bearing Hitler's autograph and solemn assurances?" That is what—hypocrisy excised—the Government's "No, Sir" means.

Some Points which Puzzle Us.—There is no doubt that a section of the public, and many of our friends outside Britain, are puzzled by the (at present) apparent inability of our Army in Britain to stage any sort of diversion in the occupied territories facing our southern and eastern coastline. These critics believe that France and the Low Countries, if not Norway, have been vitally denuded of troops, Panzer units and aeroplanes, withdrawn to the East; and they have some colour for suggesting that this is a golden opportunity which will not recur for at least a year. He is a bold man who criticises strategical matters without knowledge of facts, especially of "supply" facts. On the other hand, we heard too much last year of the advanced stage of our Army's training for "attack" on the Continent, of trained parachute troops, and raid practices. How much "diversion" a large-scale raid on occupied territory would produce no armchair critic can possibly estimate. The Russian War was a complete surprise to us, and five weeks is not a long time for planning such a diversion, whose success must depend on infinite preparation to the last detail. But there *is* colour for disappointment in the uninformed public that the Army at home can apparently "do nothing." People begin to ask whether we fear too much another failure on land and whether our policy is now to rely entirely on air attack and to keep

A STUDY BY CECIL BEATON: Internationally famous Society photographer, Mr. Cecil Beaton is now hard at work for the Air Ministry and Ministry of Information. He has turned his exceptional abilities to illustrating handbooks, one for the W.A.A.F.s and a sequel to the "Battle of Britain." He has also undertaken the formidable task of picturing Britain at war from every aspect. Notwithstanding all this, Mr. Beaton has found time to take his camera along to the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, where he has captured pictorially, in his own inimitable style, the appeal of the ailing youngsters. He has generously donated the copyright of his photographs to the hospital

the Home Army purely for defence against invasion. Silence is best, but thoughts cannot be controlled, especially since (in the public view) the R.A.F. damage to enemy shipping is making the prospect of invasion this year less and less likely. And that raises another point which puzzles us—the heart-breaking delay at the War Office in establishing the proper function of the Home Guard. The appropriate Ministers never cease to flatter that body or to stress its vital importance. But they do nothing to improve its chances of co-operating in practices with the Regulars with whom, in invasion, it is supposed to work. Local regular units do indeed do much to help with Home Guard training, but when more distant units move into new Home Guard areas for schemes, they treat that body as if they were proved Fifth Columnists and give them no opportunity at all to pick up lessons. Yet scores of Home Guard officers on the spot have time to learn invaluable experience from these exercises. Then as to the Home Guard function. That vital question, on whose settlement depends the whole basis of (even primary) training, is still fluid. We are drifting back slowly to the first ideas of May 1940, but without authority. The "Inglis" theory, the lessons of Crete, are not yet adopted by authority, and we are no quicker off the mark as "moppers-up of parachutists before they become dangerous" than we were a year ago. We are indeed still training to be defenders of "focal points" and village forts against armoured vehicles. We have a plethora of arms of too many types (whose uses we cannot adequately learn) and no increase in the supply of the vital weapons which we can all use usefully in guerilla warfare. If ever a Ministerial change was urgently required, it is in the department of the War Office which is supposed to control Home Guard training and direction.

The Army and Recruiting.—Compared with the last war, our Army casualties and wastage have been hitherto child's play. Yet the Army's demands for recruits and expansion are based on the late war's needs, and vital industries and other defence and war-service forces are daily being drained for the Army. Against industrial call-ups there is some right of appeal; against Army recruitment there is none. I am not going to sling mud or stones or criticism at the Army. It does no good. The organisation and training of enormous national armies reach efficiency only after generations of practice. Britain has only enjoyed the opportunity for that practice for about five years in her long history. No armies were ever more efficient than our own small professional armies, with which we were well trained, by centuries of experience, to deal. In the organisation and training of great armies it is obvious that we are still learners. I make therefore but one point in criticism, and it is intended to be helpful. I question whether this wholesale, unfettered recruitment for the Army from industry and from the defence forces is wholly in the best interests of our Army's training and organisation. Training is perpetually interrupted by the coming-in of new, and often unsuitable, recruits, and the right material is not making the progress it should be making. Miners, farm-workers, vegetable gardeners, men of middle age quite incapable of responding to the athletic requirements of modern shock troops, are being ruthlessly torn away from vital industrial war work, to fill round holes with square pegs in the Army, and at the same time men immensely efficient in the Home Guard, and quite irreplaceable therein, are being snatched away. If this is not fair criticism of a very unwise and short-sighted policy, I am all at sea.

"Taste on the Air."—I appreciate the difficulties of the B.B.C. I am grateful for its general efficiency and its broad policy of maintaining dignity, decency, uplift and moral. No doubt at all its chief difficulty is that of the restaurateur of a high-class but popular restaurant. He must every day devise a menu which will satisfy a thousand diverse tastes. But none of those diverse tastes is likely to demand either poison, or hog-wash or vitriol, and that is why some of the B.B.C.'s rare lapses strike one as inexplicable except on the supposition that on certain days there is "go-as-you-please" at Broadcasting House, with a Lord of Misrule in cap and bells and with a muck-rake, crowned in the seat of authority. There are indeed rare instances of lack of taste and of decency; of vulgarity and insensitiveness; of monstrous, juggernaut, Caliban brutishness, which can be explained by no other means. Who is that Lord of Misrule who enjoys his periodic hour of fame and power and during it shatters the reputation for culture of the nation and the B.B.C.? How did he get inside? *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* One would have supposed that the B.B.C. chiefs were sufficiently carefully chosen and adequately paid to ensure that one of them is always on duty and of such quality as to spot and prevent the few unforgivable *gaffes* which get through from time to time.

Gayda Again.—I used to regard Gayda as one of the greatest criminals in the Axis Thieves' Kitchen. It seemed to me that the man of the pen who from his padded armchair whipped on the dogs of war and carnage anywhere and everywhere with lies and taunts and boasts and chicanery, was the most poisonous and filthy of all the jackal tribe—and the most dangerous. But time and circumstance adjust earlier opinions, and now Gayda, still in the padded chair, still dipping his pen in his vitriol pot, seems no more dangerous than the ass he is. Except, of course, to Italy, which with his heels he has helped to kick into the abyss. It seems he was so *sure* that Britain would be first embarrassed, and then won over to Nazi-ism, by Hitler's treachery to the Soviet-Nazi pact. He told his readers (with his usual clarity and confidence) that Britain would surely applaud the new crusade against Communism. And, when his prophecy was not fulfilled, he was very angry and has promised Britain an early and terrible reminder that Germany can beat Russia with her left hand, even while she smashes Britain with her right. There is something about this scribbler in his easy chair, forecasting the movements of armies and the decisions of dictators, constantly proved a liar, a false prophet, a wind-bag, a man of affairs always panting in vain behind the truth, the probabilities and the possibilities that suggests more than a pair of ass's ears tied to a child's gas-balloon. It suggests about 1,000,000 pairs of asses' ears tied to 1,000,000 wind-bags. For Signor Gayda still enjoys his circle of readers and earns money by his vitriolic pen and confident promises. They used to say that the Italians were so clever.

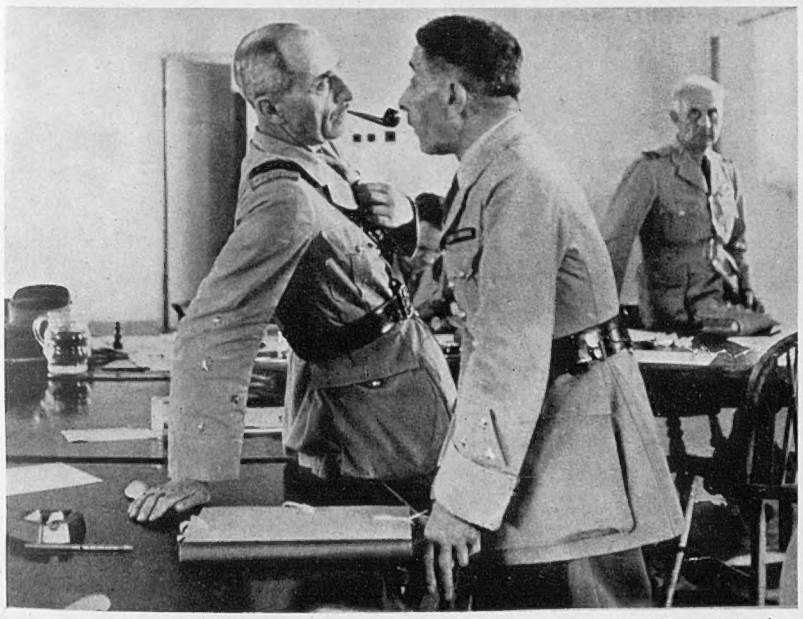
"Let It Roll."—I strongly advise readers of THE SPHERE to get a copy (Hutchinson. 6d.) of Sir Rowland Evans's pamphlet under the above title. It is a common-sense attempt to rough out a method whereby the grosser errors of Versailles may be avoided when this war ends. The author does not claim to have done more than to ventilate for discussion a concrete idea of what may be practicable in the way of utilising what was best in the essence of the League of Nations and harnessing it to what may be possible rather than what is ideal. He argues: when the war ends, something must be done quickly (not by long years of evolution) to prevent a recurrence of war. Ideally, a Federal Union between the U.S.A. and the Empire, gradually snowballing other ready and fit nations utterly opposed to war, is the remedy. But that would take years to accomplish. He suggests (since speed is essential to bridge the time-lag of evolution to world peace) that America and the Empire should agree (with or without a formal treaty) to keep in being beyond the war a naval and an air force decisively superior to those of any possible disturber of peace, while round those two Powers should be built up as fast as practicable a "Freedom Area" of peace-pledged nations. There would be no treaties, no guarantees. The success of the sanctions against an aggressor would depend on the meticulous selection of the peace-pledged "ring of freedom" nations, found worthy of inclusion by records and proofs, past and present, of their sincere desire to avoid war by all means and at all times. This ring would be and remain as fluid and as unfettered and unbound as is the British Empire.

THE OLD STAGER

IN THE SIDNEY SMITH BARRACKS AT HISTORIC ACRE : GENERAL SIR HENRY WILSON, THE C.-IN-C., APPENDS HIS SIGNATURE TO THE ARMISTICE DOCUMENT : On the General's right is General Catroux, leader of the Free French delegation at the ceremony

THE SIGNING OF THE SYRIAN ARMISTICE

On July 14—France's great day of National celebration—the war in Syria came to an end, with the signing of the Armistice between the Allied Forces and the Vichy army under General Dentz. The ceremony was carried out in Palestine, in the historic town of Acre. Here, in the Sidney Smith Barracks, the British delegation under General Wilson met the Vichy delegation under General de Verdillac. A prominent figure at the signing of the Armistice was General Catroux, the Free French leader in the Middle East. The very simple schoolroom of the Barracks was the scene depicted in the illustrations reproduced here



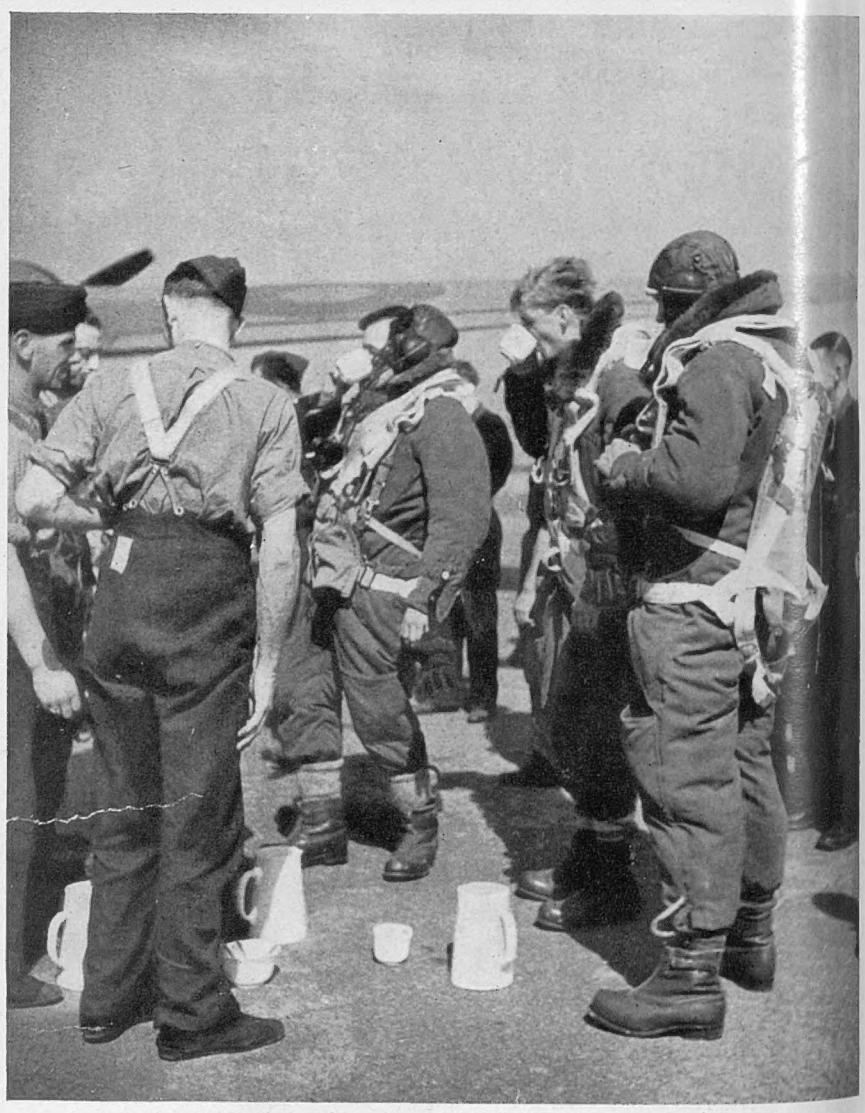
AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE ARMISTICE : General Catroux, the Free French leader, chats to General Andre de Verdillac, who led the Vichy delegation and who had previously been the Field Commander of the Vichy forces in Syria (on right)

OUTSIDE THE BUILDING WHERE THE ARMISTICE WAS SIGNED AT ACRE : Air Commodore Brown ; Lieut.-General Lavarack, Commander-in-Chief of the Australian troops ; General Sir Henry Maitland Wilson, commanding the Imperial Forces ; and General Catroux, Commander-in-Chief of the Free French Forces

JUST BEFORE SETTING OUT FOR BREST : The Boeing pilots receive last-minute instructions from the Intelligence officer

The joint attacks on the German battleship *Gneisenau* at Brest and on the *Scharnhorst* at La Pallice have aroused the very liveliest interest both in Britain and in the United States. These two successful raids are notable as marking the beginning of the "stratosphere" war by the new and huge Boeing aircraft known as Flying Fortresses. The pictures reproduced here were taken just before the Brest raiders set out on their high-level attack and just as the first of the Boeings returned to its base. The Flying Fortresses can operate at more than 30,000 ft., where they are practically safe from anti-aircraft fire and from all but a few of the enemy's fighters: we now have a number of these wonderful aircraft. The R.A.F. are not only far ahead of Germany in "stratosphere" flying and bombing, but they also have the best bomb sights for high-level attacks and the biggest and deadliest bombs. The difficulties of bomb-aiming from this height are enormous, nevertheless seven hits were observed on the *Gneisenau* and several bombs were seen to straddle the dock in which she was lying! The crews of the Boeings were specially equipped for their trying task: they were all picked men and their training had been specially undertaken. Oxygen and specially heated suits employed counteract the effects of the extreme height

JUST BEFORE THE TAKE-OFF : One of the pilots taking part in the raid talks to two members of the crew who are accompanying him to Brest

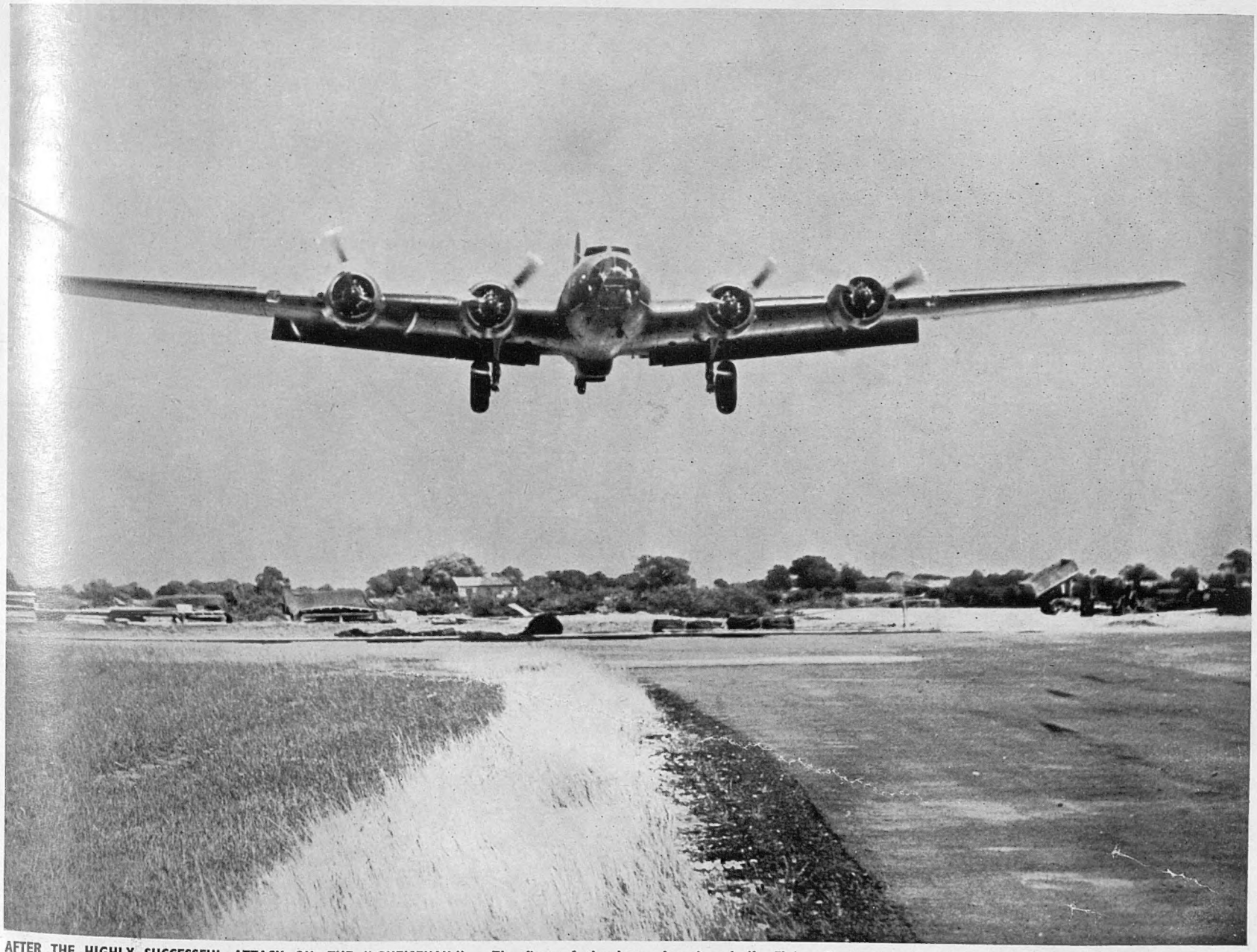


ALL READY AND WEARING THEIR FULL FLYING EQUIPMENT : The crews of the Boeing bombers have a final cup of tea before setting off for their "stratosphere" flight

THE MEN WHO BOMBED THE "GNEISENAU" AT BREST: *Official Air Ministry pictures*

JUST ABOUT TO ENTER THE AIRCRAFT: Note the fur-lined flying helmet with its bulge over the ear for the telephone: over the nose and mouth is the oxygen mask, connected up with the big pipe on the right, and joined to it is the mouthpiece for the inter-com. telephone

THREE MEMBERS OF A BOEING'S CREW EQUIPPED FOR HIGH FLYING—they are wearing their oxygen masks, heated suits, and parachutes—just before taking off



AFTER THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL ATTACK ON THE "GNEISENAU": The first of the huge American-built Flying Fortresses returns to its base from the Brest raid, with flaps and wheels down for the landing and with its four big engines just ticking over

THE COMMANDER OF THE MOSCOW GARRISON : General Tyulenev (in centre) who commands the whole military area

THE COMMANDER OF THE KIEV MILITARY AREA : Colonel-General M. Kirponos (on right), walking through the streets of the Ukrainian capital, which he may be called upon to defend against the Germans

DEFENDER OF MOSCOW : General Alexei Ignatiev, a former count and a member of an old Russian family. He was formerly military attaché in Paris

A RUSSIAN OFFICER CAPTURED BY THE GERMANS : It is stated by the Germans that this officer was identified as General Richter : he was captured in the Lvov area. The man at the left is a foreign correspondent who, with others, interviewed the captured general. This picture was sent from Berlin to New York, and thence to Britain

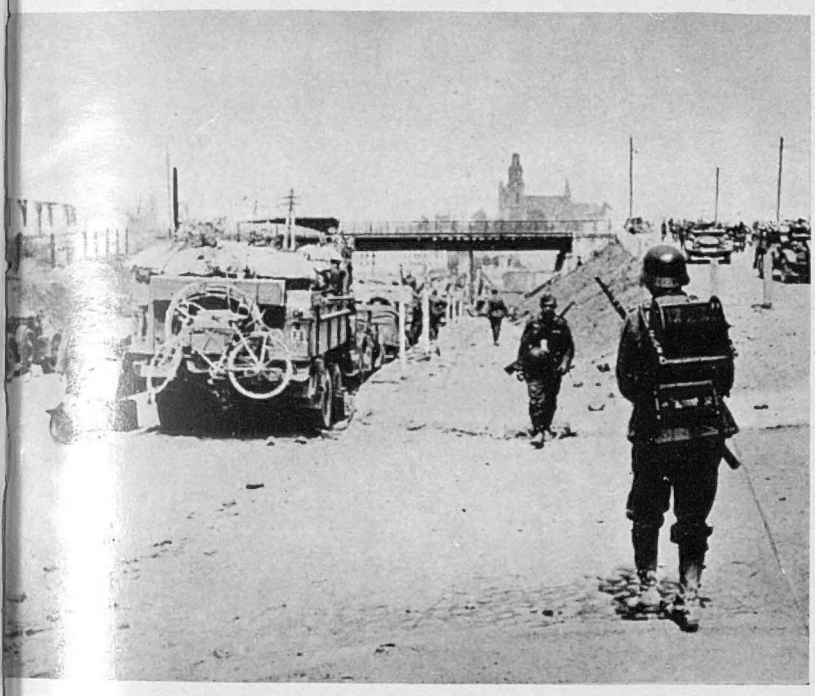
TANKS and the "SCORCHED EARTH" in RUSSIA

The pictures reproduced on these pages have all reached London within the past few days : some are obviously of German origin, but all are interesting in that they show the type of warfare now being waged along the whole fighting front, from Leningrad to the Black Sea. The pictures of Russian tanks are of especial interest : it was not until the opening of hostilities that it became apparent that Russia had one or two very nasty surprises for the enemy ! The size and armament of some of the tanks came as a distinct shock to the Germans

Above—**RED ARMY TANKS MOVING UP :** (*Below*)—**MECHANISED UNITS OF THE RED ARMY IN AN IMPRESSIVE PHALANX :** The myth of invincibility with which the Germans surrounded their Panzer Divisions has been exploded on the battlefields of Russia. The Red tanks have been holding their own, and very heavy casualties among the crack tank forces of Germany have been reported during the recent fighting

ON A RUSSIAN ROAD NEAR THE FRONT : A Russian armoured-car patrol unit travelling one of the loose-surfaced roads in the fighting zone Presumably this unit was engaged on the task of rounding-up any German detachments which had managed to penetrate the Russian front

GERMAN TANKS MASSING FOR AN ATTACK ON THE RUSSIAN PLAINS : This authentic picture shows German tactics across the wide rolling plains : it is not stated from which area it emanates, although the contour of the country would suggest the Ukraine or Bessarabia, rather than the more confused northern sectors of the fighting line. The German caption states that "soon the tank chain will be advancing past the wreck of a Soviet tank, following up the retreating enemy." The enemy, however, seems to be far from inactive, to judge from the shells bursting over the advancing German masses !



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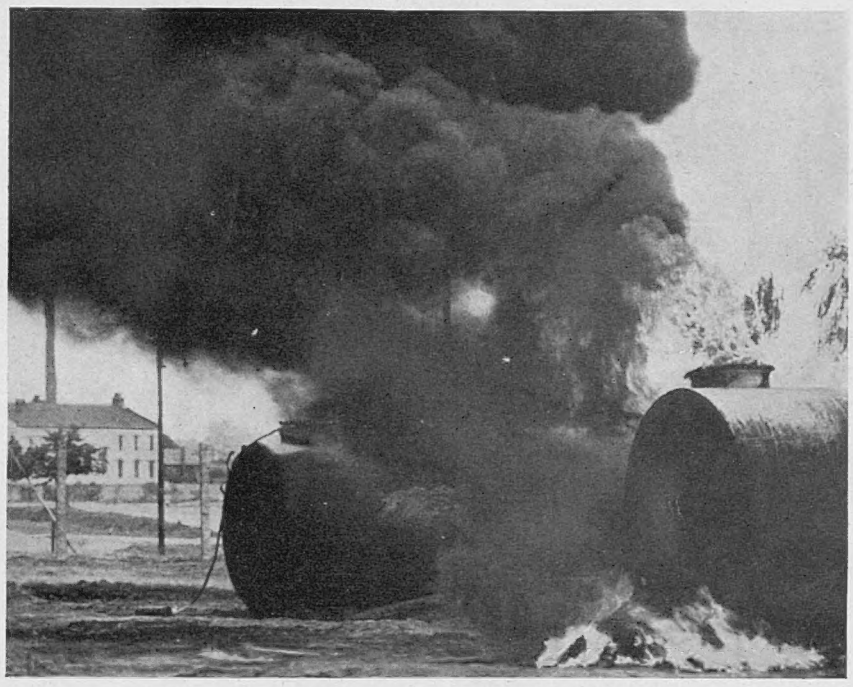
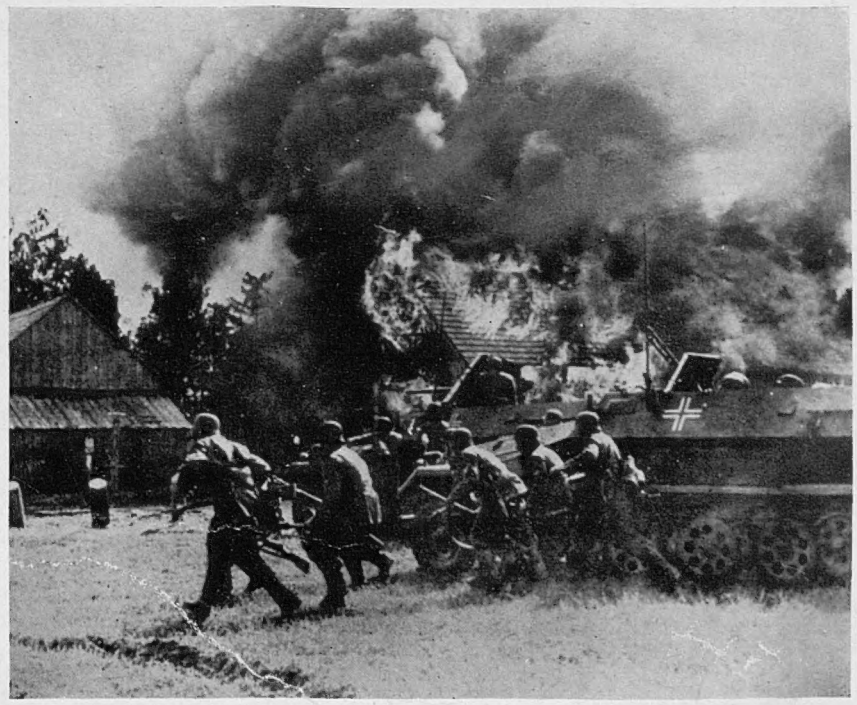
THE RUSSIAN TOWN OF GRODNO JUST AFTER THE ENTRY OF THE GERMANS : ...s have apparently "moved in" in every sense of the word ! Note the soldier on the right with a coil of telephone wire carried on his back

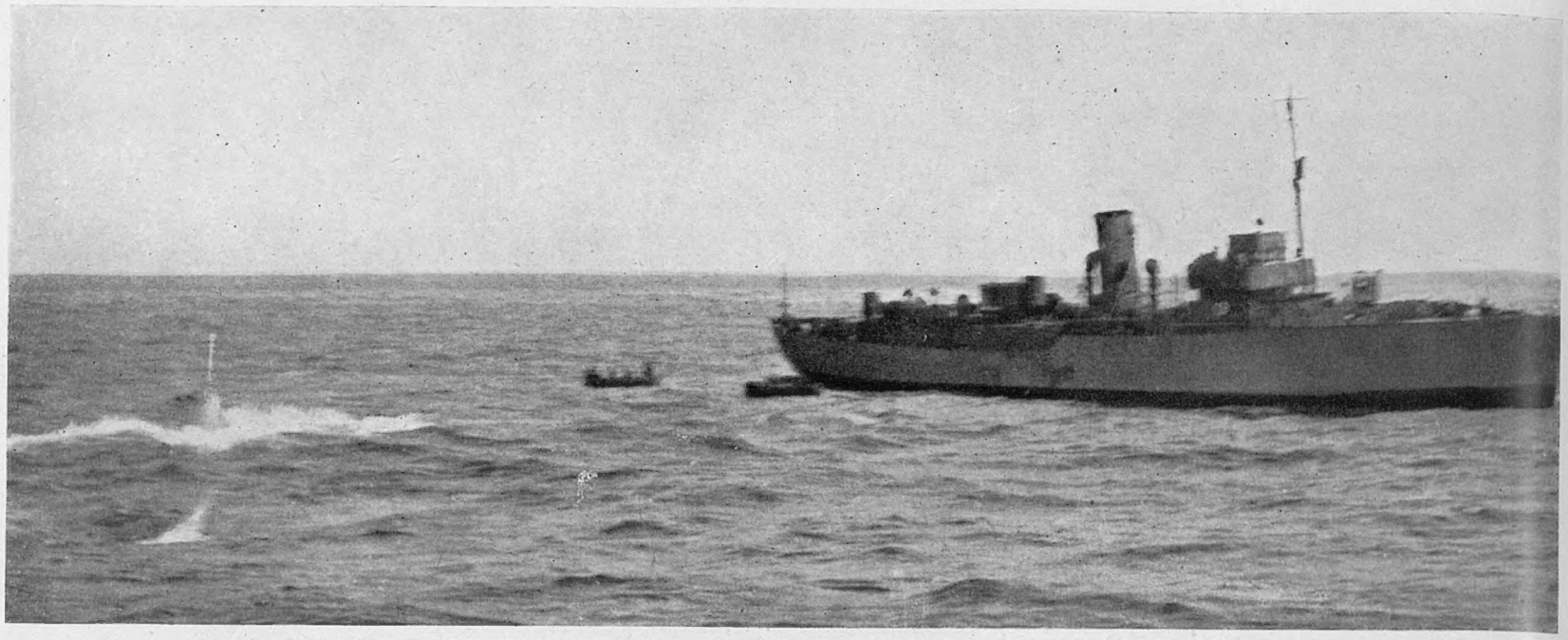


THE RUSSIANS BURN ALL PETROL SUPPLIES AS THE NAZIS ADVANCE : These tanks were left ablaze by the Russians before the German entry into Lemberg. In pursuance of Stalin's policy of leaving nothing of use behind, the tanks were fired before the defenders withdrew

THE NAZIS USE HAND GRENADES TO DISLODGE THE TENACIOUS RUSSIANS : A picture which demonstrates the great difficulty of the German advance owing to the tenacity of the Russian resistance. Nazi troops are here seen entering a Russian village which has been fired : but they know that Russian snipers may still be putting up a resistance, so they advance with hand grenades at the ready



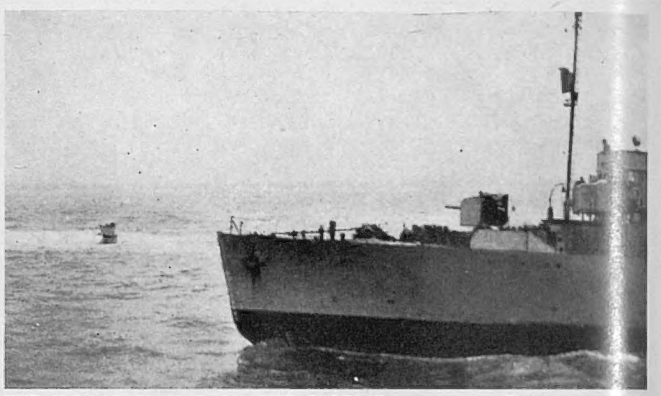
THE GERMANS FEAR RUSSIAN SNIPERS AS THEY ENTER A BURNING VILLAGE : The mechanised forces are in one of the many villages burnt in pursuance of Stalin's "scorched earth" policy. There is, however, one hut on the left which is not burning and the German infantry make a wary approach to it as there is every likelihood that a nest of Russian snipers may still be heroically holding out there



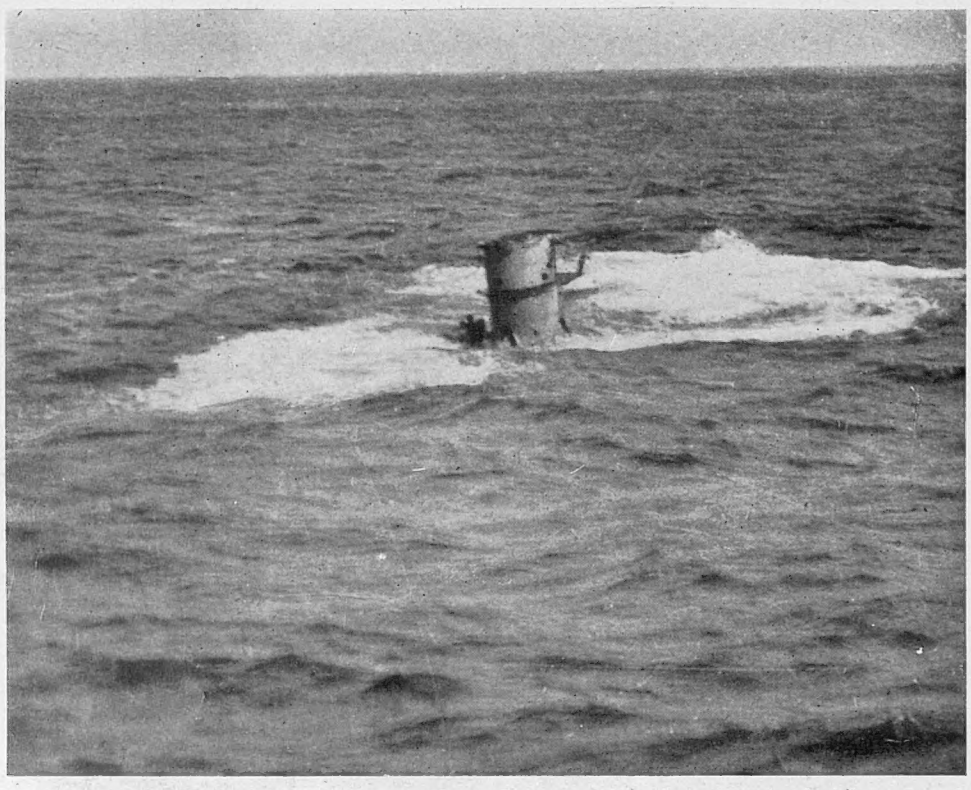
THE U-BOAT ON THE SURFACE: The submarine's conning-tower is just visible above the water: the British corvette has lowered two boats, which are waiting to pick up any German survivors

THE END OF ANOTHER U-BOAT

A Series of New and Official Pictures



THE U-BOAT ALMOST ON THE SURFACE, with the British corvette standing by to pick up the survivors



THE CONNING-TOWER OF THE U-BOAT, seen above the water after the submarine had been forced to come to the surface by the depth-charges fired by the corvettes

When referring to the sinking of German U-boats by our warships in the House of Commons a few months back, Mr. Winston Churchill referred to the news he had to announce as "delectable tidings." A recent dramatic incident in the Atlantic, portrayed in these pictures, has provided more tidings of a delectable kind for the Premier—and the nation! British corvettes detected a Nazi U-boat and gallantly fought the submarine with depth-charges and gunfire. They finally sent their quarry to the bottom, thus scoring still another victory for Britain's "pygmy warships"—the gallant little vessels which are playing their part nobly in the Battle of the Atlantic

THE CREW OF A GERMAN SUBMARINE CAPTURED IN A SEA RESCUE AND LANDED AT A BRITISH PORT: The U-boat was sunk, but a number of her crew were saved; they are here lined up on the quayside awaiting transportation to a prisoners-of-war camp

The RUSSIAN CANALS

The Inland Waterways which May Soon Play a Large Part in Russia's Effort

NO other country in the world is so rich as the Soviet Union in natural waterways, where approximately 250,000 miles are available for shipping and floating down timber.

Before 1930 little had been done to harness these waterways, many of the pre-Soviet canal systems having been built 150-200 years ago. The tremendous development of inland water communication which has taken place during the last ten years has been brought about mainly by the requirements of the various "Five Year Plans." and the opening-up of new industrial regions. Apart from purely industrial requirements, it was considered essential to make some military use of this development.

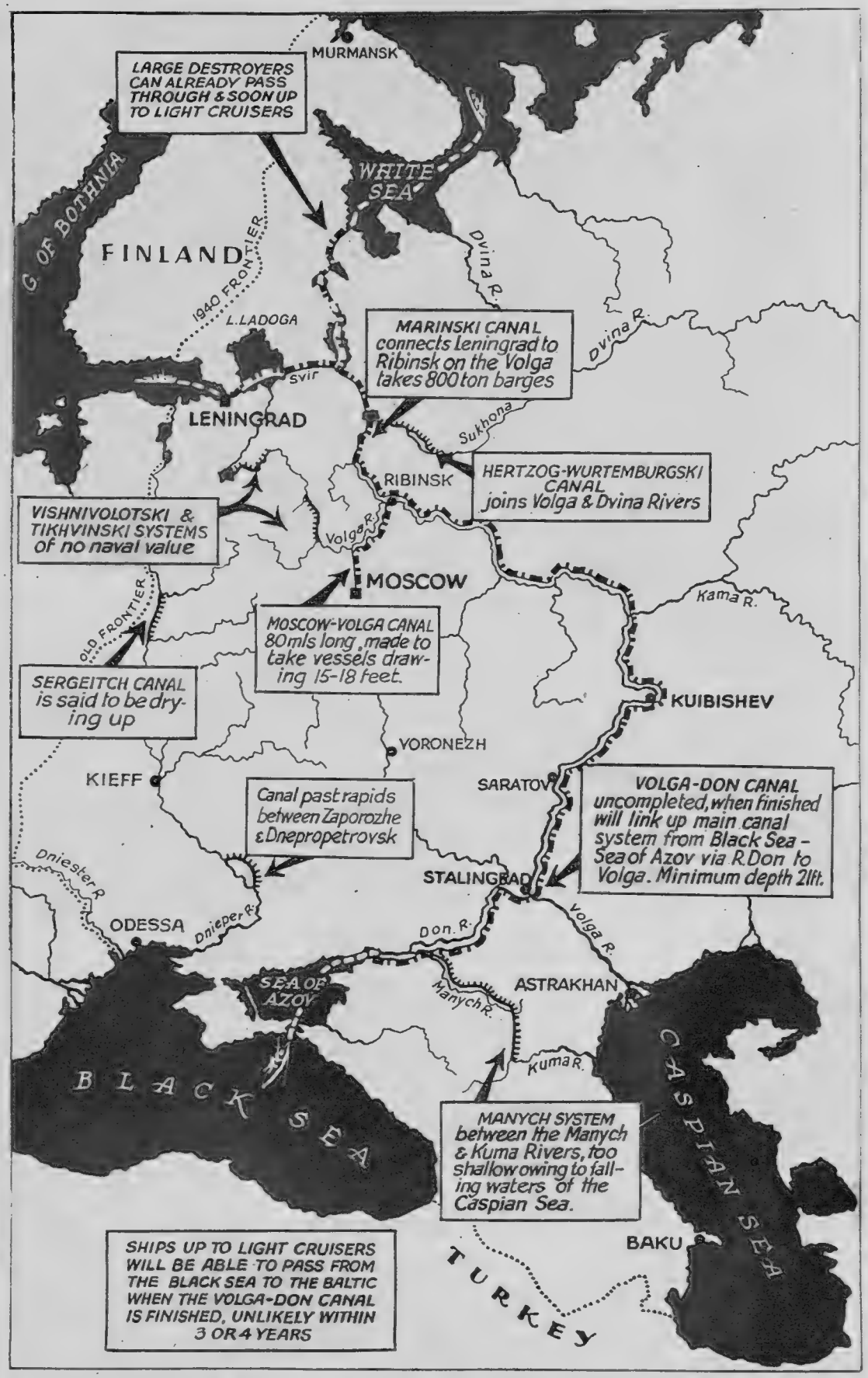
In the case of the Stalin Canal, connecting the Baltic to the White Sea, the construction was dictated entirely by strategical reasons. On the other hand, the military factor in the case of the Moscow Canal is comparatively trifling until the whole of the system of rivers and canals linking up the Azov, Black and Caspian Seas to the Baltic has been completed, when a considerable measure of naval strategical independence will have been achieved.

The Soviet aim at a unified system of waterways connecting the Baltic, White, Caspian, Azov and Black Seas, and linking them with Moscow. The depth throughout the system is to be such as to allow light cruisers to be transferred from one area to another on "interior lines."

Here is a description of some of the principal canals in the Russian system: First comes the **Baltic White Sea Canal.** The Rivers Neva and Svir and the Imeni-Stalin Canal form the Baltic White Sea Canal, which is 560 miles long. On the River Svir one large lock has lately been completed and a second lock is under construction; a temporary canal has been built round this area so as to avoid interference with navigation during construction. On the Imeni-Stalin Canal there are nineteen locks, built in 1932 and mostly made of wood, with dimensions: length, 379 ft.; width, 50 ft.; depth, 15 ft. The depth of water in the canal is about 12 ft.

The **Marinski System** connects Leningrad to Ribinsk, on the Volga. It is only suitable for barges up to 800 tons, and owing to the large number of locks (forty-three), the transit from Ribinsk to Leningrad is slow. Modernisation plans include increasing the depth and reducing the number of locks to six.

The **Moscow-Volga Canal** is 80 miles in length; it was completed in 1937 and is designed to take vessels drawing 15-18 ft. It is not at present used by vessels of this draft, owing to the incomplete state of the reconstruction of the General Canal System.



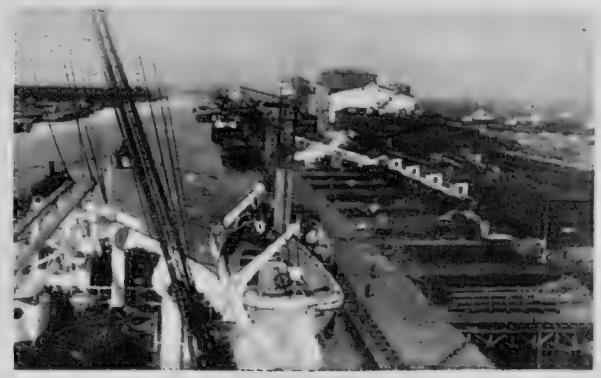
HOW RUSSIA IS LINKED UP INTERNALLY BY A HUGE CANAL SYSTEM: Apart from the railway lines—which may or may not be captured by the Germans—Russian transport can still be operated by means of this vast network of waterways—*A Special "Sphere" Map*

HOW THE GERMANS THOUGHT TO TRAP THE SOVIET FLEET: The Baltic Fleet is based on Leningrad: with the westward exits blocked, it was thought by the enemy that he had the Red Fleet trapped in the Baltic. But despite the heavy attacks by dive-bombers on the Stalin Canal, the Soviet's main submarine forces have been evacuated to the White Sea and the open waters beyond. The canal runs from Leningrad along the south shores of Lake Ladoga, north to Lake Onega, and thence to Soroka and the ice-free shores of the White Sea

In the **Manych System,** the canal was to connect the head-waters of the Manych and Kuma Rivers and thus the Black Sea to the Baltic, *via* the Caspian Sea and the River Volga. A considerable amount of the construction on this canal was completed, but it has now apparently been abandoned, presumably on account of the navigational difficulties of the Caspian Sea.

The **Volga-Don Canal** will join the River Don to the River Volga immediately below Stalingrad. When complete it will link up the Black Sea with the main canal system. Work on the canal is believed to have been commenced early in 1939. It is not likely that it will be completed for some time. The system, from the Sea of Azov, *via* the River Don, is designed for a minimum depth of 21 ft. The completion of this canal will probably solve the problem set by the falling level of the Caspian Sea, since it will be possible to harness the waters of the River Don to the Lower Volga.

There are other minor systems in the U.S.S.R., which, however, are of little importance from a naval point of view; but it is now known that ships up to the size of large destroyers can already pass between the Baltic and the White Sea. Ships up to the size of light cruisers will be able to pass between the Baltic and the White Sea when work now in hand is completed. And at some time in the more remote future ships up to the size of light cruisers will be able to pass between the Baltic and Black Sea when the Volga-Don Canal is completed.



CANALS ARE AMONGST RUSSIA'S MAIN COMMUNICATIONS: Here are the harbours and shipping at the head of the canalised River Neva at Leningrad

THE AIM OF THE GERMAN ARMIES IN THE NORTHERN SECTOR OF THE RUSSIAN BATTLE LINE: The city of Leningrad, on the River Neva, as seen from above the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul and looking across the river to the centre of the city—*Drawing by Sydney R. Jones*

Standing in the immediate foreground is the historic Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, with its equally historic cathedral of the same name. On the left of this view, running up from the river, is the famous Nevski Prospekt; and on the very outskirts of the city is the railway running south to Moscow. On the river front, facing the Citadel of St. Peter and St. Paul, is the Winter Palace, home of the old Russian Tsardom: next to this is the group of Admiralty Buildings. The church in the right half of the drawing is St. Isaac's Cathedral

LENINGRAD, NORTHERN CAPITAL of RUSSIA

By MERIEL BUCHANAN

ALWAYS, dominating everything in Leningrad, is the Neva, for, built on the islands formed by the different branches of the great river, it is impossible to be far away from it, in whichever part of the city one's footsteps lead one. In winter, when it lies still and fettered under its deep covering of snow and ice; in summer, when it flows, bright turquoise blue, or the colour of molten copper, between the massive stone quays; in autumn, when its grey waters are ruffled by the wind, and covered with blocks of ice, floating down from Lake Ladoga—always one feels its presence, is conscious of its mighty strength, its restless, turbulent spirit.

There are very few cities in Europe, I think, that can boast of a more beautiful view than that seen from the Troïtsky Bridge which spans the Neva, close to the old red Soltikoff Palace, part of which was once the British Embassy. Standing here one looks across at the grim brown fortress, with the water-gate opening on to the river, and, above the walls, the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, with the tall, unbelievable slender spire, soaring up into the sky like a golden flame. All down the shores stand the great palaces, with their rows of windows glittering in the sunlight—the Marble Palace, the Vladimir Palace, the Nicholas Palace, the huge red Winter Palace, the Yellow Admiralty with its bright green roof, and, jutting out into the middle of the river, the Bourse, with its tall grey pillars, and the old pink palace of Prince Menshikoff, Peter the Great's most powerful favourite. Away in the distance towers the great golden dome of St. Isaac's, and faintly one glimpses the straight line of the Nevski Prospekt, three miles long, the widest, biggest, longest street of shops, offices, palaces and Government buildings in Europe.

Turning away from the Troïtsky Bridge, one faces the Suvoroff Square and the open expanse of the Champ de Mars, where military parades and reviews were held, and behind it, at the corner of the Summer Gardens, the high pink walls of the Michael Palace, built for the Emperor Paul, but later turned into an engineering academy. Sombre and impressive with its majestic archway, its octagonal court, the vastness of its marble staircase, it always seemed haunted by the spirit of the man who, in his abject terror of assassination, built it in the form of a fortress, and for greater safety surrounded it with a moat, only to die a hideous death within its walls.

Crossing the Suvoroff Square one passes the Hermitage, with its priceless treasures of art, and reaches the big Palace Square, flanked on one side by the long façade of the Winter Palace, and on the other by the red Government Offices, with, in the centre, the tall archway leading into the Moïska, the Bond Street of old St. Petersburg, with the famous premises of Fabergé, the big hotels, the smart dress shops and restaurants.

Even on the dullest autumn days, or on one of those hopeless spring mornings when the streets were a sea of mud and slush and yellow, melting snow, there were colour and beauty to be found. The blue-painted dome of a church, spangled with silver stars. A gipsy woman in a red or orange shawl. Golden spires gleaming sullenly against the grey leaden sky. A peasant in a bright green blouse. The beautiful equestrian statue of Peter the Great in the Alexander Gardens. A sudden glimpse of a canal, with old houses, and palaces behind high iron gates.

No wonder that, in the days of Catherine, St. Petersburg was called the "Venice of the North." No wonder it haunts one's memory. The frozen expanse of the Neva in winter, the hushed silence of the snow-covered streets, the noise of the traffic muted to the sound of sledges slipping over the snow, the musical jingle of bells, the hoarse, warning cry of coachmen,

IN THE HEART OF THE CITY OF LENINGRAD: Founded by Peter the Great as St. Petersburg, it later became known as Petrograd (during the last war), and then as Leningrad (after the Revolution of 1917). Of its many famous thoroughfares and open spaces, the best known was the Nevski Prospekt: this is now known as the Prospekt of 25th October. It is still the most important of Leningrad's streets, and droshkies still ply there, as of yore!

And in summer, the long light evenings, the flaming sunsets that had not faded from the skies before the fire and glow of the dawning day lit them up again, so that the golden weathercock on the spire of St. Peter and St. Paul was always lit by a ray of sunshine.

On those long evenings, one could drive out to the point of the islands that juts out into the Gulf of Finland, or take a little green-painted boat and row down one of the branches of the river, past wooded shores, and big cool villas from whose open windows one could hear the sound of music and laughter. And returning, one would drive once more across the Troïtsky Bridge. The windows of the palaces along the quay would be red in the light of the setting sun, the spire of St. Peter and St. Paul would be mirrored in the still waters of the river, and the blue mist would steal round the fortress walls. The Venice of the North, beautiful as few other cities, and yet, in some strange way, lying under an intangible curse.

LENINGRAD, FROM THE ROOF OF ST. ISAAC'S CATHEDRAL: On the right is the River Neva, flowing towards the Gulf of Finland. The city has been subjected to heavy bombing attacks by the Germans, as their armies approach the Northern Capital by land from two directions

The OLD ROYAL RESIDENCES of the TSARS

Now Being Approached by the Tide of Battle

ABOVE the silver cascades of fountains rushing down the gradual slope of falling terraces into the Gulf of Finland rises the big palace of Peterhof, with its painted walls of cream and red, its three long ranges of windows and the five golden domes of the Imperial Chapel shimmering against the sky.

Built—by order of Peter the Great—by the French architect Leblond in imitation of Versailles, and enlarged by Peter's daughter, the Empress Elizabeth, it lacks the charm and loveliness of some of the other palaces; it is perhaps a little too ostentatious, almost too formal and ponderous, with its sweeping terraces, its vast staircases and halls, its huge, gaudy rooms, its masses of Chinese lacquer, its marble pillars, its heavy, gold ornaments.

It is the shining vista of the Gulf of Finland, pale, turquoise blue on summer days, veiled in hyacinth-coloured mists in the evenings, the silver music of the waterfalls and countless fountains, that make the charm of Peterhof, for one could wander hour after hour in the park and come, at every turning, on some new view of a lake, on some new fountain carved in marble or stone. And it is in the little palaces of the Hermitage and Marly, situated at different points of the park, and more especially in the white cottage of Mon Plaisir, built low down near the water with its terrace right on the sea, its blue and white tiled kitchen, its simply furnished rooms, that one finds the more intimate memories of the Emperor Peter, the man who hated all formality and sumptuous grandeur, and loved to spend his days in this simple house, cooking his own meals, sitting on the terrace, smoking his long pipe, while his courtiers danced, played cards and gorged themselves with food and drink in the palace up on the hill.

It was at Peterhof, on the morning of July 9, 1762, that the young wife of the Emperor Peter III was wakened roughly from her sleep by Gregory Orloff. "It is time for you to get up," he told her brusquely. "Everything is prepared to proclaim you Empress." It was from here that, in the pale dusk of the summer morning, she set out to drive the 25 miles to the capital, and assume complete power of the Russian Empire, and it was here that her husband came, later on in the day, accompanied by his mistress, Elizabeth Woronzoff, and here that he received the message telling him he had been deposed, and his wife made Empress by the will of the Army and the people.

It is at Tsarskoe Seloe, lying inland about eighteen miles south-east of Petrograd, built originally by Elizabeth, but enlarged and beautified by Catherine, that one recaptured the memories of this woman, who by some was called the "Semiramis of the North." The vast white palace, with its bright green roof, looks out on one side into a wide courtyard, entered by three beautifully carved iron gates; on the other it rises above the gardens and the lake, with its yellow marble column, erected in honour of Alexis Orloff, on the occasion of his victory over the Turks at Tchesni. A little to the right, and above the lake, is the Chinese Garden, with its miniature canals and swan pond, its carved bridge of imitation coral. Farther on is the Theatre built by Cameron, and the Pavilion, with its cunningly constructed table, that could be raised and lowered through the floor,

(Continued on following page)

LENINGRAD STANDS ON THE NEVA AND AT THE HEAD OF KRONSTADT BAY: In the immediate neighbourhood are the old residences of Imperial Russia, where the Tsars dwelt within easy distance of their capital—at Tsarskoe Seloe and at Peterhof—*Drawing by E. G. Lambert*

ROYAL RESIDENCES OF THE TSARS

(Continued from preceding page)

thus doing away with the presence of servants in the room. On the other side of the lake, in the green shadow of the trees, is the Hermitage, the Concert Hall and the Grotto, and opening out of the palace and overhanging the lake is Cameron's Gallery, where Catherine walked on rainy days, followed by her inseparable companions the English greyhounds, known as the Family of Sir Tom Anderson.

It was at Tsarskoe that Catherine spent all her summers. The Amber Room, with its primrose-yellow panels, the Wedgwood Room, the Ballroom, with its long mirrors, the black and gold Chinese Room, the Lapis Lazuli Room, with its deep-blue pillars, the bedroom, with its columns of silver, its cunningly arranged looking-glass, its beautifully painted ceiling; everywhere the spirit of Catherine is present—the tapping of her long cane on the polished floors, the rustle of her purple silk dress, the yapping of the dogs that always followed her.

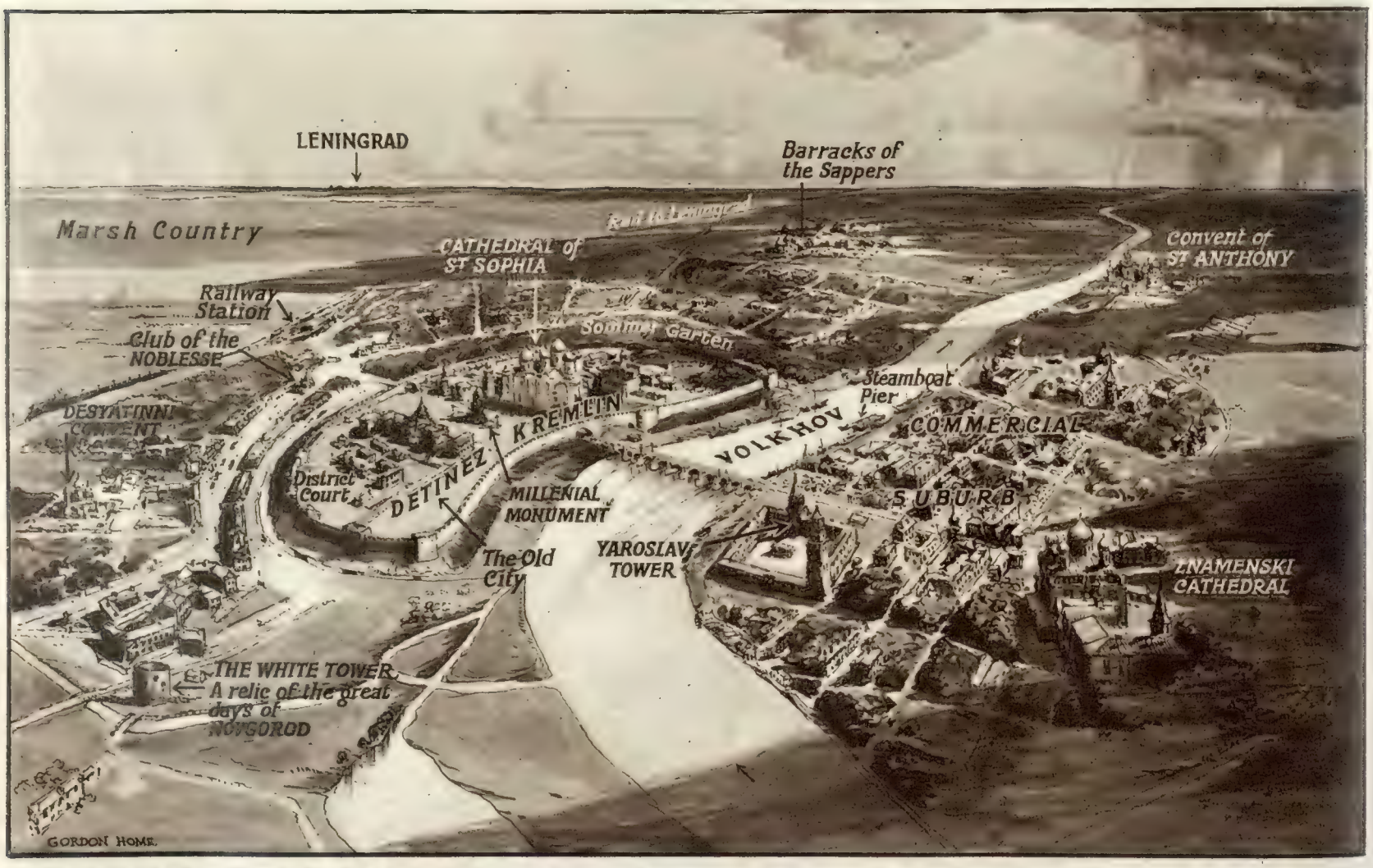
Close to Tsarskoe lies the park of Pavlosk, with its green slopes, its temples and pavilions, its tiny meandering river, the pinewoods with their sandy tracks, and the big yellow palace, built for the Emperor Paul when he was still Grand Duke.

Memories of happy days seem to linger at Pavlosk, crowding together with the Family Grove, where every tree commemorates the birth of a child, whispering in the Temple of Friendship, in the small garden house, with the painted walls, which Paul's wife, the Grand Duchess Marie Feodorovna, decorated with her own hands, and in the Pavillon des Roses, where garlands of imitation roses hang from the chandeliers, and roses are painted on the walls, embroidered on the tapestried chairs, carved in stucco over the doors, and grow in wild confusion in the little garden outside the long windows.

Formerly a favourite summer residence of the Tsars—the park in the grounds of the Peterhof Palace, near Leningrad, is now the favourite leisure resort of the workers of the city

IN THE GROUNDS OF THE CATHERINE PARK AT TSARSKOE SELO: The so-called "Cameron Gallery." In Tsarist days Tsarskoe Selo was a sort of Russian Windsor. To-day, the beautiful grounds have been given over to the people, and they more resemble Blackpool or Southend

THE FORMER WINTER PALACE AT LENINGRAD: After the Revolution of 1917 one-half of this was given over to the Hermitage Art Gallery, the other being occupied by the "Museum of Revolution"



STANDING BETWEEN THE GERMAN INVADER AND THE CITY OF LENINGRAD: The historic city of Novgorod (or New Town), formerly Novgorod the Great, one of the cradles of Russian history—*Drawing by Gordon Home*

Novgorod (New Town), formerly Novgorod the Great, is on the River Volchov, near where it issues from Lake Ilmen, about 100 miles south of Leningrad, and is therefore under the threat of the invading forces of Nazidom. The town was founded early in the Christian era, and from the ninth century, when Rurik, the Norseman, invaded the district, Novgorod became so powerful that there arose the saying, "None can resist God and Novgorod the Great." In 1862 the thousandth anniversary of the city was celebrated and the great monument of bronze and stone opposite the Cathedral of St. Sophia was erected. In the eleventh century the Cathedral in the Kremlin was built. The monastery of St. Anthony was founded in 1106.

If the Nazi *Luftwaffe* "Rotterdams" Novgorod it will deprive the world of a great deal that is irreplaceable in medieval art and architecture. As early as the twelfth century it had important connection with the Hanse cities, and it became the market of north-east Europe. During the time of its prosperity it was called Novgorod the Great, and had 400,000 inhabitants and extended its sway to the White Sea and the River Petchora. Its Government was a sort of republic. The greatness of Novgorod provoked the jealousy of the Princes of Moscow, and in 1471 the Tsar Ivan III nearly destroyed the town, bereft it of its liberties, and exiled the most influential citizens: and when Archangel was opened for English trading vessels, but especially after the foundation of St. Petersburg, its trade fell away, and the town rapidly declined, until now it is but the shadow of its former self.

SOVIET PLANES BOMB AN ADVANCING NAZI COLUMN AND CAUSE CONFUSION AMONGST TANKS AND TRANSPORT : The bombers have just passed over, and the chaos they have caused is complete. German lorries and motorised troops moving up to the front are all over the road, and a heavy tank, seen in the right background, has mounted the bank into the adjoining field in an effort to get round the traffic jam. In the distance is the Russian village which the German troops are trying to reach

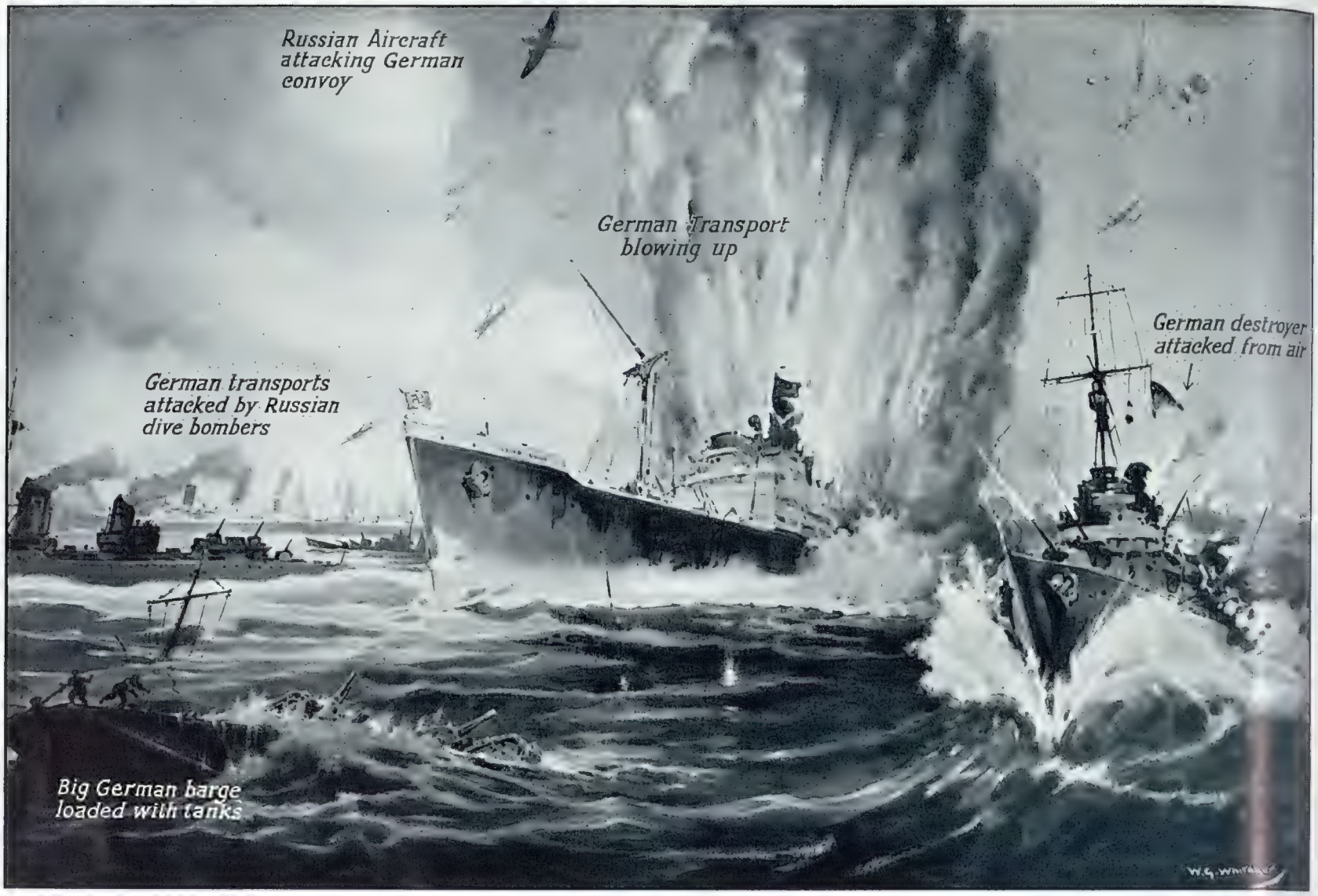
PICTURES from RUSSIA

It did not take long for Britain and Russia to come to agreement in connection with the war against Hitlerism. On July 12, in M. Molotov's office in the Kremlin, signatures were appended to an Anglo-Russian Agreement providing for mutual assistance and stipulating that neither country will conclude a separate armistice or peace treaty. M. Stalin was present at the ceremony, and afterwards he and M. Molotov toasted the British representatives in champagne. Sir Stafford Cripps, our Ambassador in Moscow, signed for Great Britain, and M. Molotov signed on behalf of the Soviet. Throughout the negotiations leading up to this achievement, the Dominions and the United States were kept fully informed

Below—**THE SIGNING OF THE PACT OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE between the Soviet and Great Britain :** M. Molotov is actually seen putting his signature to the document. From left to right are Mr. C. Dunlop, M. Potrubatch, M. Kozyrev, Sir Stafford Cripps, M. Stalin, and Mr. Trant

RUSSIAN PRISONERS BEING MARCHED AWAY : The German propaganda machine is already working very hard on the Russian front, and pictures like the above are beginning to flood the neutral countries. It shows a group of prisoners captured during the recent fighting in Russia. It will be noticed that (a) there are not many prisoners ; (b) the dusty roads are crowded ; and (c) that cars and cycles have had to take to the fields

GERMANY'S PANZER CHIEF KILLED : It has been reported that General Guderian has been killed on the Russian front, and the report has spread dismay throughout Germany. It was General Guderian who was the organiser of the enemy's Panzer divisions which swept so swiftly through Belgium, France and Greece



THE SMASHING-UP OF A NAZI CONVOY IN THE BALTIC BY THE RUSSIAN NAVY—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

A recent Russian communiqué gave brief details of the destruction of a big German convoy during a night engagement with the Russian Navy in the Baltic. The details of this action reveal that it was one of the most successful against enemy convoys of the present war. The German fleet in convoy comprised twenty-six transports; these were carrying troops, munitions, and equipment, and at least one sea-going barge laden with tanks. Destroyers, mine-sweeping trawlers and a large force of fighter aircraft were in attendance as escorts. Patrols of the Red Air Force had spotted the convoy, however: it was allowed to get close to shore before action was taken. Then a strong force of Russian naval speed-boats darted in: the surprise was complete! Bombers and fighters also took off from Russian airfields and bombed the transports in relays. Finally Red destroyers took a hand. In the result the convoy was completely broken up, many were set on fire or collided with each other or ran ashore—going to the bottom with their troops and supplies. Only thirteen transports and one destroyer managed to escape to sea

THE ATTACK ON HITLER'S MERCHANT NAVY

A Merciless Warfare which is Hitting the Enemy (pro rata) Far Harder than He is Hitting Us

By FRANK C. BOWEN

THE authorities take every measure to suppress undue optimism on the part of the public, but undue pessimism demands attention as well. While the figures of British shipping losses by enemy action are serious, and must be taken seriously, there is no justification for the public's tendency to ignore the figures of enemy ships sunk by the Allies, as it does almost entirely, for these losses are very serious to the Axis and the figures are most satisfactory.

Germany is obviously finding it very difficult to keep her huge conquests in Europe under efficient military control. All the railways are overtaxed by traffic, their maintenance work is in arrears, and they are constantly being damaged by air raids and *saboteurs*. The sea is therefore the only really practical main supply line for any really heavy weight of military traffic from the Skaw to the Pyrenees, and the only possible one to occupied Norway, along her coast, and to Libya and the Greek islands. The success of British attacks, gallantly supported by the small forces of our overrun Allies, on these supply-lanes is having a very serious effect.

Satisfactory as the figures are, they must be taken as a very conservative estimate, for the British routine is to admit no claim unless it is morally certain, and every one has to go through an Admiralty sieve with a very close mesh, considered unfairly close by many of those who have taken part in the attacks. On this conservative estimate, about 3,400,000 tons of Axis merchant shipping has been sunk since the outbreak of war, in addition to over 300,000 tons seized by the American Republics. Some of these ships were sunk, or scuttled by their own people, in trying to slip home through the British blockade, and the figure also includes supply-ships for raiders and transports to Libya and Greece. A very large proportion of them, however, are German or German-controlled supply ships off the coasts of Northern Europe.

THE END OF A GERMAN SUPPLY SHIP: This Admiralty picture shows how British naval aircraft destroyed the German ship *Elbe*, of 9,179 tons, one of the supply ships recently rounded up in the Atlantic. The photograph was taken as the ship was burning fiercely—the result of one hit—whilst other bombs were bursting alongside. Disguised as a Norwegian, the *Elbe* attempted to elude our patrols. Taking no notice of repeated signals from naval aircraft, she made a hopeless attempt to escape at full speed

The campaign against these ships has been "hotted up" very greatly within recent months, and they have been subject to attack by submarines, surface warships, motor torpedo-boats, and aircraft with bombs and torpedoes. Our people have missed many opportunities through fulfilling every possible requirement of international law with the utmost scruple. The manner in which the *Bremen* was allowed to escape will be well remembered, and in several cases the occupants of military transports were allowed ample time to take to their boats, although there was no real need to go as far as that. This regard for the letter of the law demanded great self-control in face of German atrocities on the high seas.

All sorts of ships are employed on this European supply trade, not only German, but also those of the occupied countries which were unable to get away and serve the Allies. They are protected by a very large number of convoy craft of all kinds—trawlers and drifters, seized Dutch, Danish and Norwegian small craft, specially designed German escort vessels, large motor-launches and special anti-aircraft

(*Flak*) ships. Shorter distances and the protection of the shore batteries, which exist in dozens, make the convoying problem very much easier for the Germans than for the British, who have to meet constant attack in the open seas. A large number of the busiest lanes also enjoy the natural protection of sandbanks, which make attack by surface men-of-war or submarines very difficult.

In spite of all these handicaps, the attacks get home almost daily; ships are observed to sink and burn, and others have to be beached in a hurry. This occurs within the sight of thousands of the inhabitants of occupied territories, which is a very useful antidote to German propaganda and fifth columnists. In spite of the intensity of the attacks, there are no atrocities like the Germans torpedoing, and sinking by gunfire, single ships hundreds of miles from land, with only the open boats which Hitler himself acknowledged not to be a safe refuge. The German ships are always within reach of land, and the convoy and other vessels are available for the rescue of their people.

The German communiqués never mention these attacks, which is significant. The care of the Admiralty method undoubtedly results in an under-estimate of the damage done, but it is impossible to say just how much this amounts to. It is not only in the ships which may possibly have escaped, but also in the very conservative estimate of the tonnage of each ship seen to sink. The general opinion is that the figures could safely be increased by at least 20 per cent., but that is only guesswork.

This policy is in very sharp contrast to that of the Axis, which can be judged by the fact that their triumphs during the month of June were exaggerated by 165 per cent. To anybody who knows the sea, the lie is given to their story by their own definite figure of 876,783 tons, for it is impossible to ascertain the exact tonnage of a ship which is only seen for a few seconds through a submarine's periscope or through bursts of anti-aircraft fire. Nowadays the appearance of 90 per cent. of the ships at sea is more or less standardised, and the name is very seldom painted on the side.

Further additions to the British figures can be safely made on account of air raids on the invasion ports. In the Rotterdam raid of July 16 alone, it was roughly estimated that between 90,000 and 100,000 tons of shipping, either German or German-controlled, was sunk or put out of action, and this is not included in the British figures.

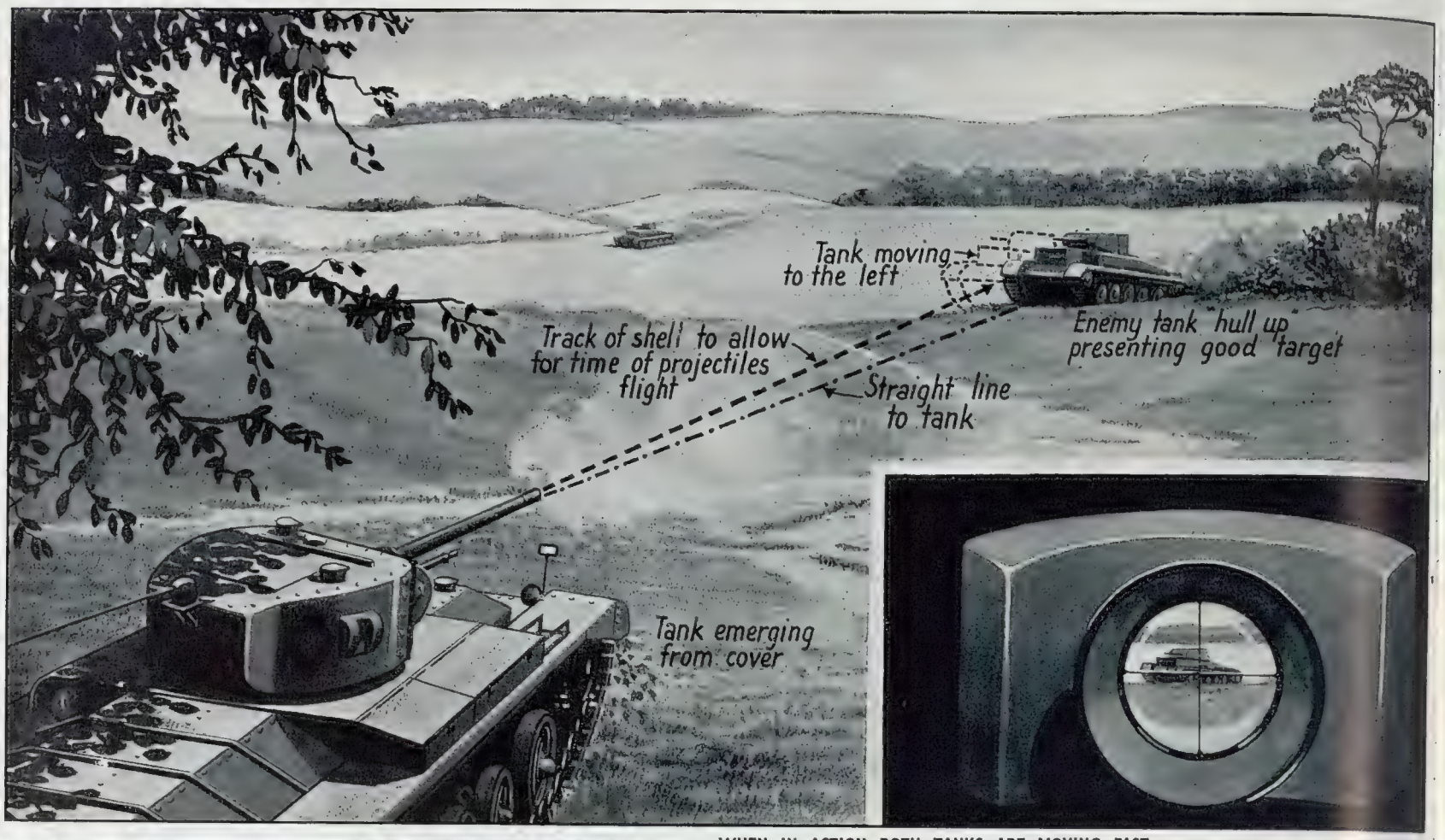
U.S. TROOPS SAIL FOR MANŒUVRES AT AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION: These three Army transports in New York Harbour are preparing "to sail for manœuvres at an unknown destination." The picture reached *The Sphere* office shortly after the announcement that the first American troops had landed at Iceland

THE SCOURGE OF NAZI SHIPPING IN THE NORTH SEA: The scene from the bridge of a British destroyer as she ploughs her way through heavy seas whilst on patrol duty off the enemy's long coastline

THE R.A.F. ARE NOW ATTACKING HITLER'S SHIPPING DAILY—The German anti-aircraft batteries sited at intervals along the occupied coast are kept busy, trying to repel the now-constant attacks by heavy British bombing forces—*Drawing by William McDowell*

A comparison between the amount of German and British shipping on the high seas and on coastal routes will readily show that, *pro rata*, German losses are far and away heavier than the British. Much of the destruction is being wrought by the R.A.F.—both Coastal and Bomber Commands participating whenever an opportunity presents itself. Owing to the disorganisation of his internal routes—railways, roads and canals—Hitler is being forced more and more to use merchant vessels to carry supplies to his extended occupied territories. In many areas the enemy is known to be suffering severely from a lack of sufficient ships. And the R.A.F.—to say nothing of the Royal Navy—are giving him no respite. The above drawing has been reconstructed from photographic material which has reached us from an enemy source. It shows German A.-A. gunners within the occupied zone attempting to repel a heavy aerial attack on a supply convoy

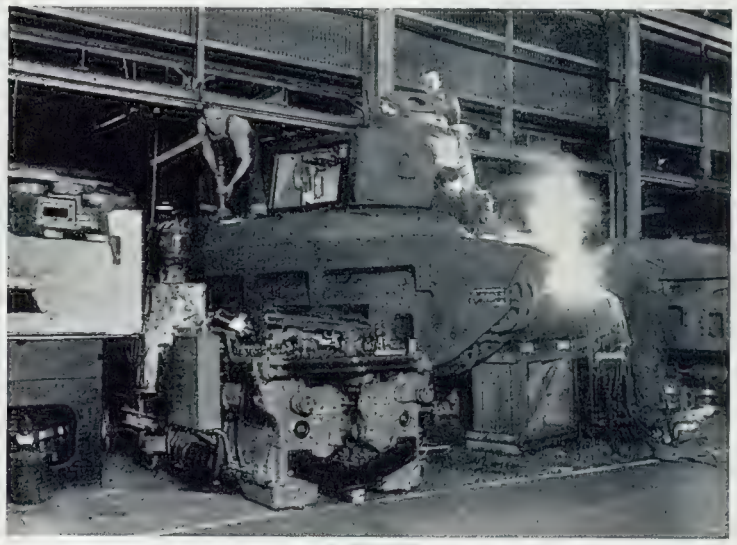
TANK TACTICS as DEMONSTRATED in the TITANIC STRUGGLES in the RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN



WHEN IN ACTION BOTH TANKS ARE MOVING FAST—*Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood*

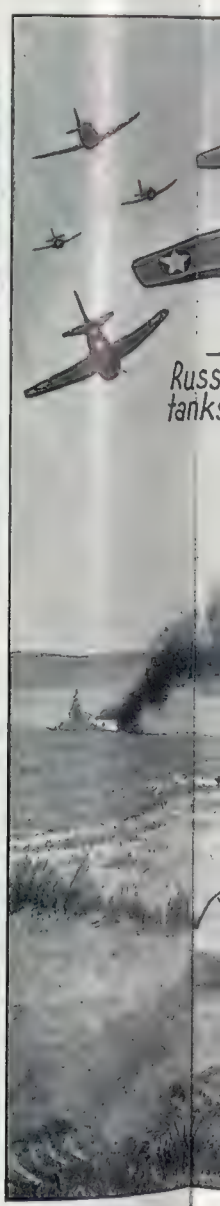
Under actual warfare conditions the tank gunners work under very considerable difficulties. Not only are they confined within a small space inside the tank, but the noise and fumes must be appalling: all shutters are, of course, closed—and the gunner sees his target through a sight such as that shown in the bottom right drawing. He has to line up his gun by means of this; and at a time when the tank is plunging wildly over uneven terrain. Added to this, as both fighting machines are moving quite quickly, allowances have to be made in much the same way as during a running fight at sea. With a light tank armed only with machine-guns the gunner has to hit the enemy—not with single shells, but with bursts of fire, during which his sights must remain on the target. In order to secure the necessary precision of movement, the training of a tank gunner is a very thorough affair

AT A SCHOOL FOR TANK OFFICERS: Fixing a track to a medium tank: Working-class lads can now train to be officers in one of the crack corps of the British Army: a private income is not necessary, and a lad from an elementary school has as much chance as an Etonian! The unit concerned is the Royal Armoured Corps, which now includes the old Tank Corps and fully mechanised, famous ex-cavalry regiments, like the Hussars. The R.A.C. is growing so fast that the supply of tanks and other equipment is more than keeping pace with the supply of men of the "leader" type: because of this a Young Soldiers' Regiment has been created to form a reservoir of boys of promise: recruits for this are taken between the ages of 18 and 19½ years and they receive a very thorough training in this most highly specialised branch of modern, mechanised warfare



TANK PRODUCTION IS NOW IN FULL SWING IN BRITAIN, and hundreds of them are coming from the factories of the Ministry of Supply

HOW THE TRACK IS RUN ON TO A NEW TANK: The heavy armament in the gun turrets will be fitted later



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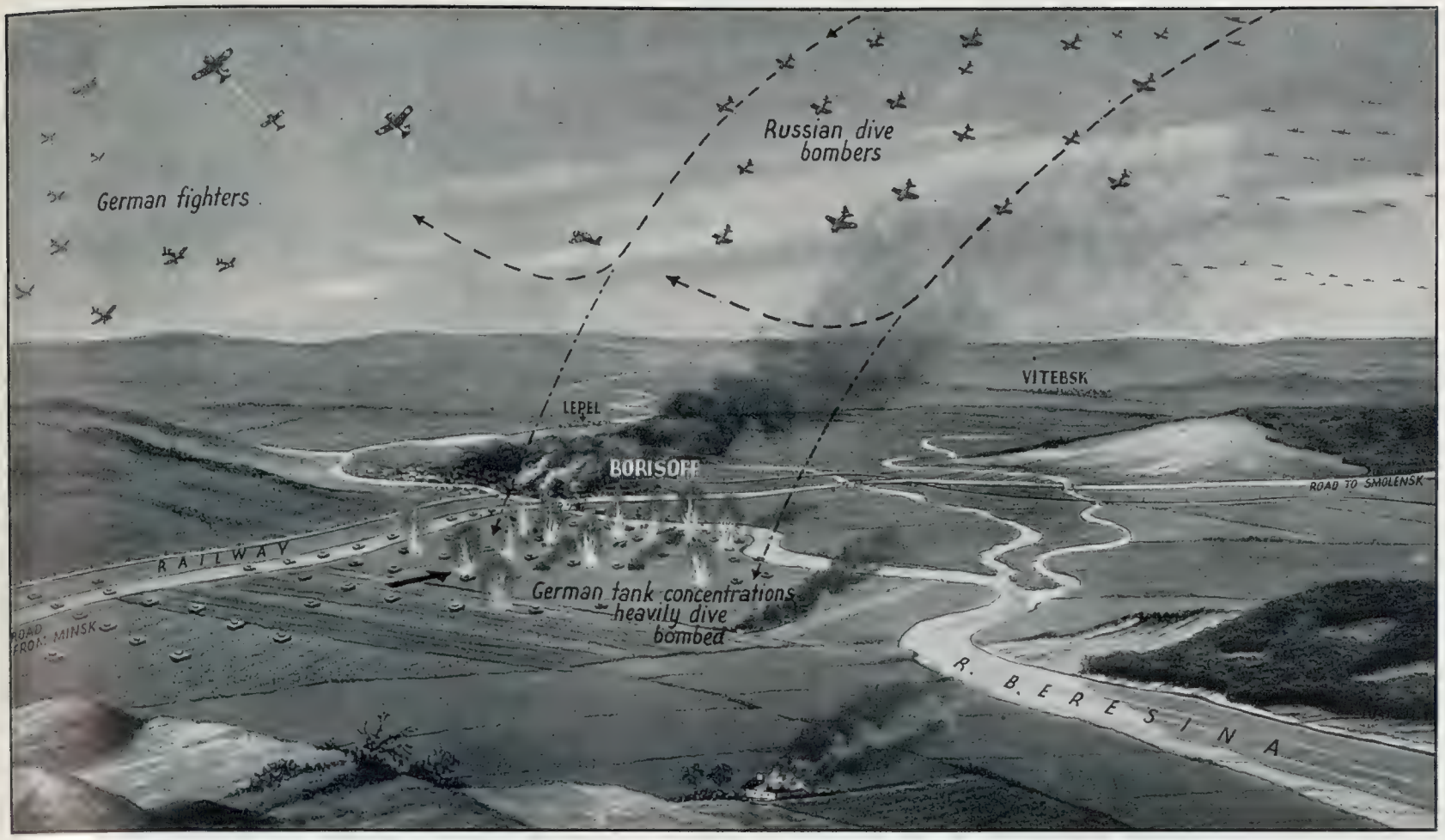
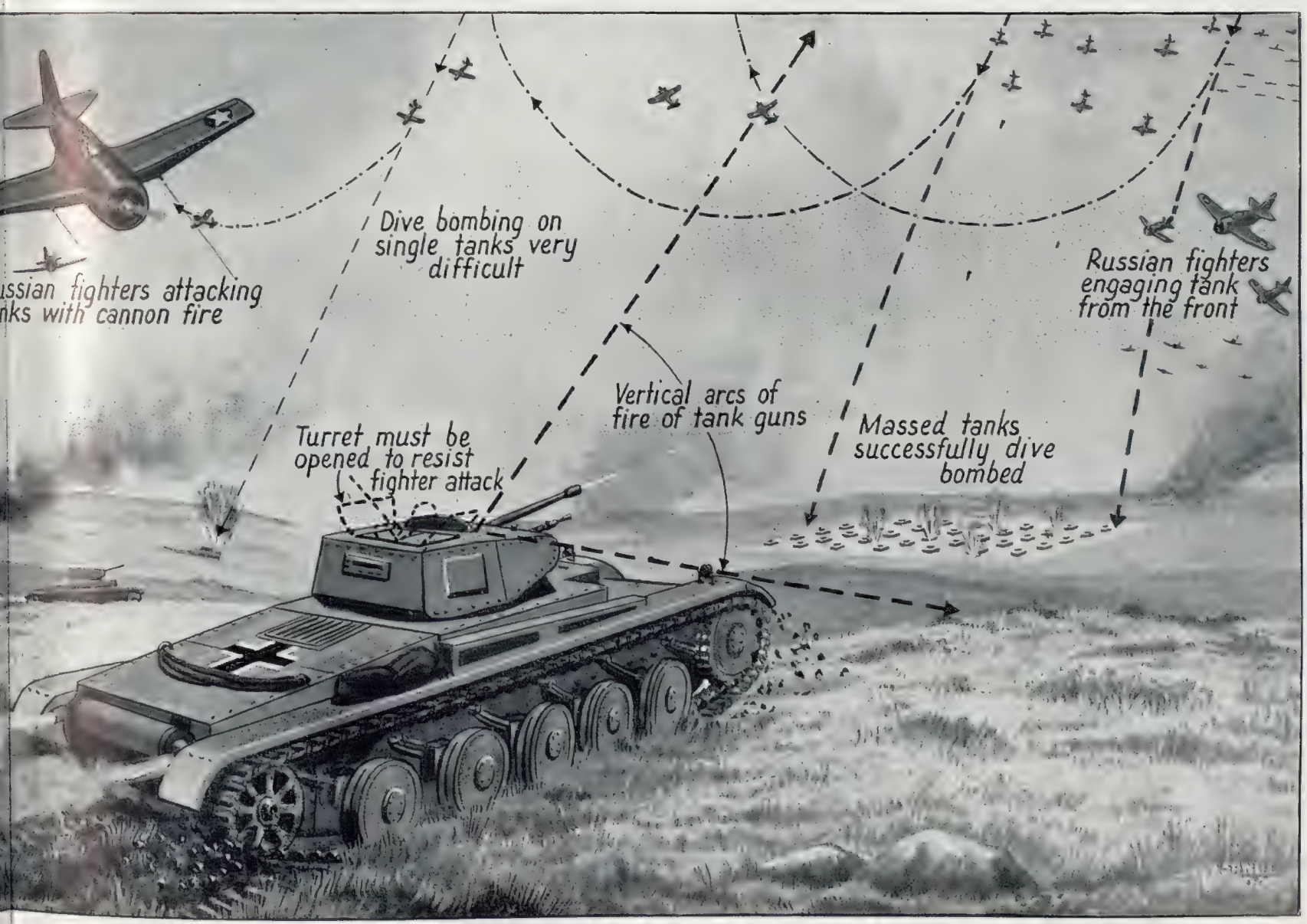


HOW THE RUSSIANS DESTROYED 100 NAZI TANKS BY DIVE-BOMBING TACTICS NEAR BORISOFF ON THE BERESINA RIVER—*Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood*

As was fully expected at the outbreak of hostilities between Germany and Russia, the former country is largely relying on tanks in its attempt to break down the Red Army's defences. But, great as have been the German successes with this arm in previous campaigns, in Russia the tank has a formidable and implacable foe in the Red dive-bomber. At Borisoff on the Beresina River, for instance, the Soviet have claimed the destruction of 100 German tanks by this means. When operating against massed concentrations such as the Germans habitually employ when making a big forward push, the dive-bomber is a very dangerous opponent. As the hatches must be opened in an attempt to repel the aircraft, the tanks are particularly vulnerable at the very moment when they can least afford to be so! By hammering away so consistently at the heavy spearhead, the Panzer Divisions have been held up badly: even where they have succeeded in withstanding the dive-bomber, the German schedule for their advance must have been sadly hampered



OF TANKS TO ATTACK FROM THE AIR, AS EVIDENCED IN THE RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN: When fighting off attacking aircraft, the hatchway of the tank must be opened to raise the gun to the required angle. Dive-bombers find massed tanks a good target, but single ones are not so easy to destroy—*Drawing by L. Ashwell Wood*

SYRIA and its NATIVE PROBLEMS

A Diversified Land Occupied by Many Races, the Proper Settlement of Which May Prove No Easy Task

Described by H. J. SHEPSTONE

THE request for an armistice by General Dentz, the French High Commissioner for Syria, was more than welcomed for many reasons. In the first place, such a campaign should never have been necessary. It would not have been had it not been for the vacillatory methods of the authorities at Vichy. As Mr. Churchill so aptly put it, it was cruel irony that 1,000 to 1,500 British, Australian and Indian soldiers who had volunteered to join the Imperial Forces in order to defend France should have been killed or wounded by French bullets.

The campaign lasted a full month. Many were inclined to be critical over the slow progress we seemed to be making. But Syria is as big as Great Britain, with an area of some 100,000 square miles, is very mountainous

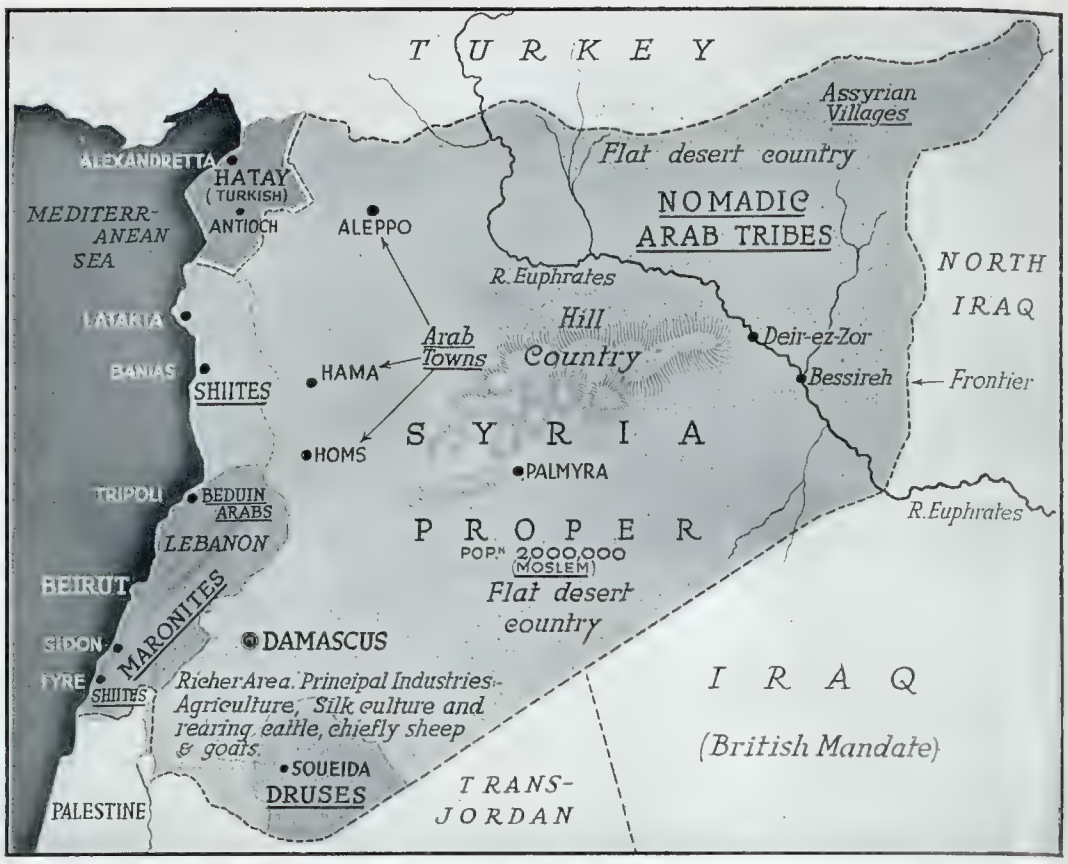
A group of Druse Sheikhs from the south-west corner of Syria

and not an easy country in which to manœuvre large forces. Furthermore, our men were faced not with colonial troops led by a few French officers, but a well-trained and fully-equipped French army that fought with courage and resource worthy of French military traditions. During the month the greater part of southern Syria fell into our hands—the coastal district and ports as far north as Beyrout, virtually the whole of the Lebanon region, the whole of the Druse district in the south, the important capital city of Damascus, Palmyra with its aerodrome and military defence works, not forgetting the eastern boundary of the country bordering Iraq. If General Sir Maitland Wilson had followed the *blitz* methods of the Nazis he no doubt could have accomplished much more, but he was anxious to avoid unnecessary bloodshed and the destruction of civilian property and lives.

Now comes the vexed question of the settlement of the country, and that is not going to prove easy. It will call for all the tact and patience of the newly-appointed Minister of State for the Middle East, Mr. Lyttelton. We have promised the Syrians their independence. The French had already done so before the present hostilities, but war intervening it was not carried out. Although Syria is as large as Great Britain, her population only totals some four millions. But they consist of many different races. Not least there is their religion. Indeed, religion is a thing of serious import in Syria. It binds a community together in something closer than blood-brotherhood, and as decisively marks it off from all others. Even the different sects of the same faith—Muslim and Christian—dwell apart in their own districts, and in their own quarters in the cities.

Just as the inhabitants of Syria are so diversified, so is the land itself. It falls into five clearly-marked divisions of plain and mountain, running roughly parallel to the shore. The streams descending from the mountains to the sea are rapid and short. True rivers are found only in the central valley. Two rise close together near Baalbec. One, the Orontes, flows northward past Antioch to the sea. The other, the Leontes, flows southward, reaching the Mediterranean just north of Tyre. Streams rising at Hasbeya, Dan and Cæsarea Philippi, join to form the Jordan.

The plains yield rich crops of cereals; there are gardens and orchards, walnut and mulberry trees. On the uplands we have pine and carob, olive, vine, fig and dwarf oak, cypress and cedar. Higher still are alpine plants. On the spacious pasturelands are cattle, sheep, and goats.



THE PEOPLES OF SYRIA AND THE DISTRICTS WHICH THEY INHABIT: Syria proper is inhabited by some 2,000,000 Muslims, who occupy the central hill country and deserts. Around the fringes of this central area—principally in the coastal areas and in the north-east and south-west—are other tribes of natives. The pacification and peaceful settlement of their conflicting interests will probably prove a big problem

A striking feature of Syria is the multitude of ancient ruins, the pathetic remains of once-splendid cities, the relics of temple and fortress, church and monastery, tomb and monument. On yonder mountain, remote and lonely, lie a few columns and carved stones, mournful witnesses of vanished glories. From this grey crag a crumbling castle frowns over the land which once it held in awe. On many a hill, in many a vale, in bosky shades where, deep in the mountain's heart, the sweet spring waters rise, you will see the broken arch, the prostrate pillar, the carven capital, the delicately-sculptured frieze, the tumbled wreck and confusion of shrine and citadel. The two most historic ruined cities of Syria are Baalbec and Palmyra.

The French did not find the country easy to govern. There was trouble with the Turks in the north, with the Arabs of Damascus, and the Druses in the

IN THE SANJAK OF ALEXANDRETTA (now known as Hatay): The Turkish Syrians acclaiming the taking-over of their territory from the French just before the outbreak of the present war

THE EMIR FAWAZ EL SHALAN, Head of the Rualla Tribe in Syria

A woman of one of the Syrian tribes at work in the desert

SHIITE MUSLIMS, WHO ARE THE FOLLOWERS OF ALI: This tribe consists of Muslim fanatics who are great sticklers for ceremonial purity

mountainous region to the south. The League of Nations was on more than one occasion called upon to settle national aspirations. As a result, Syria to-day is not one state but four.

There is Syria proper, which is as big as England, with a population of some 2,000,000 Orthodox Muslims—Sunnis—with Damascus, the largest city in Syria, as the capital. Their ambition is to make their portion of Syria an independent Arab state. The Arab world generally favours their claim.

Next comes the Lebanon, a narrow strip of picturesque, mountainous country along the Mediterranean coast, 3,800 square miles in area, with Beyrout as the capital. Beyrout is an Arab town, but the greater majority of its inhabitants are Shiites, followers of Ali, known in Syria as Metawileh. They are very fanatical and great sticklers for ceremonial purity. They pray singly, not in groups like their Orthodox brethren. But the picturesque villages of the Lebanon are inhabited by Maronites, a hardy, Christian sect. They number about 350,000. They are descendants of a remnant of the Monothelite sect who settled on the slopes of Lebanon in the seventh century. They take their name from a monk, Maro, their first patriarch. They have many convents for both sexes spread over the country, especially in the neighbourhood of Besherreh above Tripoli.

The warlike Druses inhabit the mountainous district of Jebel ed Druz lying at the south-eastern corner of the country. No one seems to know their number, but it is probably in the neighbourhood of 100,000. Though often hospitable enough to a passing stranger, they have ever been a thorn in the flesh of the rulers of the country. They were constantly at war with the Turks, or quarrelling among themselves, and there has been much fighting between them and the French.

They have a religion of their own which is peculiar and secret. It is monotheistic—there is only one God—incomprehensible, ineffable, passionless, known by successive incarnations of which the last was Hakim, the Sixth Fatimate Caliph of Egypt. There were about seventy incarnations—one for each period of the world. Jesus is one, but not Muhammad. No further incarnations can take place. In Hakim the final appeal to humanity was made. The door is now closed for ever. But Hakim will come again, when the tribulation of the faithful reaches its height, to conquer, and render his religion supreme. Mecca will be taken, Jerusalem will fall, and, finally, the world will accept the faith.

French cavalry prisoners from the Vichy forces marching into a British camp after capture

GENERAL LE GENTILHOMME, who commanded the Free French Forces in Syria. He was formerly Governor of French Somaliland at Jibuti. During the Syrian campaign he was wounded in action, but continued with his military duties

They believe in the transmigration of souls in the sense that the number of existing souls never varies, and that all souls now existent have lived existed in some human form, and that when a man dies his soul puts on a fresh humanity which occupies a normal rank corresponding to the purity or impurity of the past life. They have their own scriptures, which are jealously guarded. They regard prayer as an impertinent interference with the Creator. They have their own meeting houses (Khalwas), and on Thursday evening, when their weekly day of rest begins, gather for study, or for the discussion of ecclesiastical and political affairs.

Lastly there is the Sanjak of Alexandretta, with Antioch as the capital, whose population is Turkish. By agreement with France this province of Syria was handed over to Turkey just before the present conflict and has been renamed Hatay, a word which means Hittite. This action was contrary to the wishes of the League, but as the population is Turkish and they were agreeable to the transfer, its future need not be any concern of ours.

The French selected Beyrout as their headquarters when they took over Syria from the League of Nations. It is an ancient Phœnician port and was being rapidly converted into a modern go-ahead shipping and commercial centre. To the north of it is Tripoli, which was destined to become an important port. It is the terminus of the oil pipe-line from Kirkuk, in Iraq, and just before the present upheaval there had been completed a modern refinery and facilities for shipping the oil. By agreement, Syria was entitled to one-fourth of the oil of Iraq.

Homs, Hama and Aleppo in the north of the country are purely Arab towns. The first two cities lie on the banks of the River Orontes and are famed for their giant water-wheels used for irrigating the surrounding orchards and gardens. From Aleppo there is a motor road to Antioch which can now be reached from Aleppo in just over two hours by car. Antioch is but a poor city compared with the days of St. Paul. It was here that a Christian community was for the first time formed independently of the synagogue, and here the members of the new sect were first called Christians.

TOWARDS THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN IN SYRIA : British destroyers of the Mediterranean Fleet approaching the coast of Syria in the early dawn

DURING THE BOMBARDMENT OF BEYROUT BY NIGHT : A shell-fire pattern which resembles aircraft in formation. Gun flashes from a British warship may be seen at water-level

BRITISH DESTROYERS IN FORMATION RETURNING TO HARBOUR after having been in action

These three pictures were taken during a night encounter between British and Vichy naval vessels off the coast of Syria towards the end of the campaign in that country. Ships of the Royal Australian Navy were engaged in the ensuing action, during which, it is thought, a Vichy destroyer was badly damaged and probably sunk. The Vichy ships escaped into the darkness and entered Beyrout harbour, where subsequent aerial reconnaissance established the fact that a Vichy destroyer was lying there badly damaged

THE FERRY SERVICE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

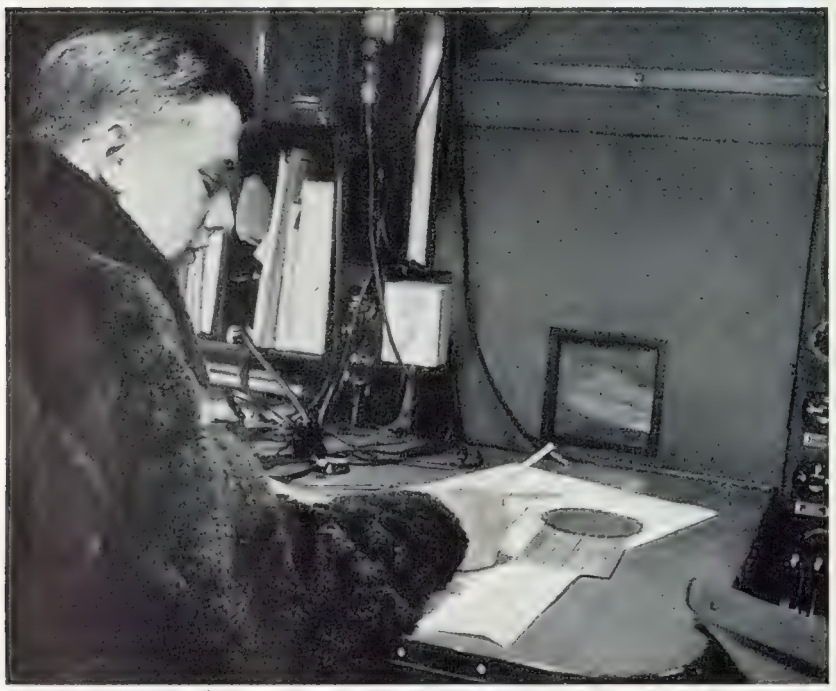
Pictures Taken Aboard one of the Big American Bombers During its Flight Over

CAPTAIN AND FIRST OFFICER AT THE CONTROLS DURING A CROSS-ATLANTIC FLIGHT: The latter is from Trans-Canada Airways, and is now seconded for duty on this highly important ferry service which is steadily supplying the R.A.F. with aircraft from factories in the United States

There is now a never-ceasing flow of U.S. aircraft reaching Britain each week from America, and many of them are being flown here direct across the Atlantic. Were the need for secrecy less great, wonderful stories could be told by the pilots whose now-everyday flights would each have made the headlines in the days before the war!

Amongst the aircraft being ferried over are the huge four-engined Liberators: at least 120 of these are on order. The crews are composed of R.A.F. and R.C.A.F. personnel, and the passengers are British and American civilians, some of whom are coming over here for service as ferry pilots and some on urgent work concerned with Britain's war effort. These official Air Ministry photographs were all taken during the course of one such cross-Atlantic flight.

The Liberator is made by the Consolidated Aircraft Corporation at San Diego, in California—the same Company that makes the equally famous Catalina. The Liberator has a very high maximum speed—about 335 m.p.h. It can carry a bomb-load of nearly two tons for a range of more than 3000 miles at a cruising speed of 230 m.p.h. This aircraft has the now well-known tricycle undercarriage



THE NAVIGATOR ON BOARD THE LIBERATOR: It is on his mathematical skill that the pilot depends during the long flight across the lonely Atlantic

THE ENGINEER AT HIS CONTROL PANEL: It is he who watches the performance of the four huge Pratt and Whitney engines, which each develop 1,200 h.p.

THE WIRELESS OPERATOR, who formerly flew with Imperial Airways. He keeps in touch both with the point of departure and the point of arrival

ONE OF THE PASSENGERS: An American from Cuba, who is joining the A.T.A. Ferry Service in England. He is looking out from the tail of the aircraft

A BRITISH CRUISER ON THE NORTHERN PATROL IN THE ATLANTIC ENCOUNTERS AN ICE-FIELD : H.M.S. "Suffolk" (of the Kent class), which took part in the chase of the "Bismarck," on patrol duty in the Arctic—*Drawing by Montague Dawson*

FROM THE TROPICS TO THE ARCTIC OCEAN

The Work of the Royal Navy in Many Waters and the Exacting Conditions Under Which the Personnel Have to Live

BEFORE the war, the designers of British cruisers came in for a good deal of criticism from lay-men because the official returns and books of reference suggested that their products were inferior to those of foreign navies—to the Italians in the matter of speed, the Americans and Japanese in weight of gunfire and the Germans in armour. Quite apart from the fact that it is safe to discount a good many of the figures which are published concerning foreign ships, even those on authority, the British designers have always concentrated largely on the qualities which do not appear on paper, but which are valued by our seamen of all ranks and generally envied by those of other navies. Our cruisers must not in any circumstances be designed for any particular duty ; they have to be prepared to work in any sea under any conditions for unlimited periods, and the experience of the war has proved that they can do so.

These exacting conditions demand not only the best of seaworthiness and big bunkers, but accommodation for ample stores and machinery which is absolutely reliable and will not break down under the heaviest strain. It is easy to understand that the provision of these factors, especially those connected with strength and reliability, demands a lot of weight which, in the navies which only consider limited service or have lower standards, can be devoted to other purposes which show up much better in theory.

One very big factor which is not usually considered is habitability, for a man-of-war with a sickly crew is useless for hard work. The British cruisers of the 10,000-ton County type have been reported as working in the tropics, Red Sea and Indian Ocean, and, on the other hand, far up in the Arctic to the north of Iceland and in the North Atlantic in the worst of winter weather. To make the ships sufficiently habitable to keep their crews fit in these wide extremes of conditions is demanding a lot of the designer.

In a modern warship the crew have to spend most of their time below deck, living on what the Navy calls "tinned air," and this demands efficient ventilating and cooling gear for the tropics and heating apparatus for cold-weather work. The high freeboard of the County cruisers is conspicuous and shows up in every picture ; this is not only useful in permitting them to maintain their speed against the heaviest seas, but it also gives excellent accommodation below deck for all hands. When they first came out they were noted as having the best accommodation of any ship of their size and type in the world, even compared with those of the American Navy, which always pays particular attention to that point.

Armour is not their strong point, but their hulls are built with tremendous strength, which is particularly useful in northern waters when field ice is liable to cause serious damage along the water-line.

Measures for meeting extremes of temperature also have to be taken in the engineers' department. They have to be prepared for high speed in all circumstances ; the cooling water which passes through the condensers in the tropics is very different in its action from that which is pumped through to the north of Iceland. Oil fuel has to be kept at the right temperature to ensure its efficient pumping and use under the boilers ; inefficiency is not only wasteful in money, but it reduces the ship's all-important radius of action.

Although it is impossible to drive a fast ship through a head sea without taking a good deal of spray on board, the County cruisers are, for their type, very satisfactorily dry ships, which means a lot in the Arctic. Spray will freeze as it comes on board, and the whole of the forward part of the ship will soon become encased in ice. Moving about on the forecastle head becomes dangerous in spite of all precautions, and, what is regarded far more seriously by the seamen, constant attention is needed to keep the ship in good fighting trim and to prevent the icing-up of anything whose free motion is all-important in action.

B.

H.M.S. "SUFFOLK" AMIDST ARCTIC DRIFT ICE IN THE FAR NORTH : The Royal Navy is operating in every sea in the world, wherever enemy surface raiders, submarines or aircraft may appear to prey on our merchant shipping or convoys. The northern part of the Denmark Straits, between Iceland and Greenland, lies within the Arctic Circle, though the drift ice extends a good deal farther south. It was here that the cruisers *Norfolk* and *Suffolk* first made contact with the *Bismarck* and *Prinz Eugen* and shadowed them for nearly 1,000 miles through ice, frequent mist and heavy squalls of snow and sleet. Even at this time of the year the weather in these regions is cold, as may be judged from the thick duffel coats worn by the gunner in the picture above

IN THE NORTHERN BOTTLENECK BETWEEN NORTH IRELAND AND THE SCOTTISH MAINLAND: A patrol of British warships keeping the seaways clear of enemy submarines and aircraft so that our ships may go through—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

PROTECTING THE OCEAN BOTTLENECKS

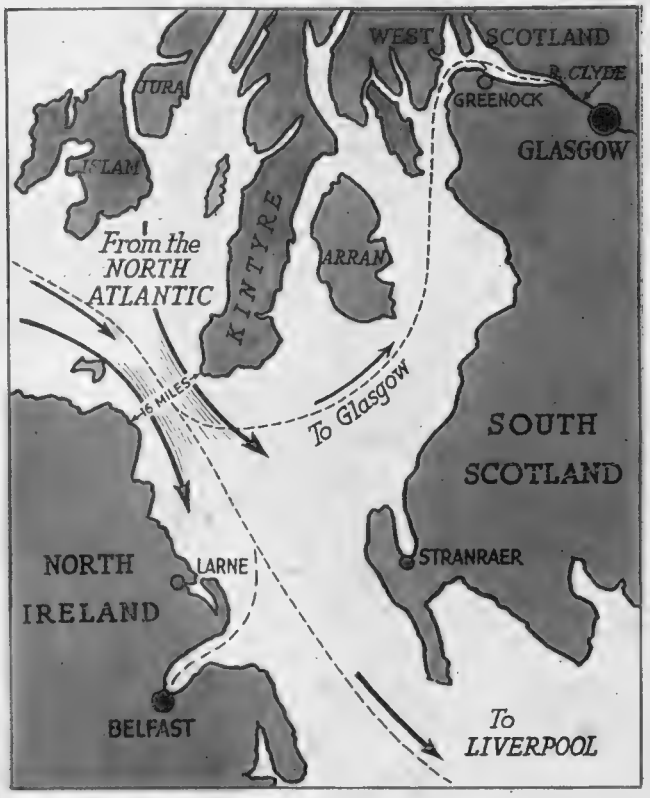
The Task of Their Defence is Greatly Increased Owing to the Proximity of the Enemy Across the Channel, and the Loss of the Irish Bases

FOR many years enemy possession of the Channel and Flanders coasts has been the dread of British administrators, for our shipping will always be the pet target of every maritime Power with whom we may be at war. Now the enemy has got them, and the coast of Northern Europe as well, with long-distance weapons of commerce destruction which were undreamed of by our forefathers. The results are certainly serious, but not nearly as disastrous as had been anticipated, largely thanks to the wonderful work of the Navy under the severe handicap of inadequate numbers. With the opposite coast in enemy possession, the work of defence is only slightly helped and very greatly handicapped by geographical considerations, and the neutrality of Eire means the serious loss of the bases at Bantry, Queenstown and Buncrana, which proved so useful in the late war for the maintenance of the outer patrols which are invaluable against surface-raiders and submarines. The fuel of our patrol vessels, whose necessary number limits their size, is naturally soon expended, and if it has to be wasted on a long passage to and from the patrol grounds the enemy is given a better chance.

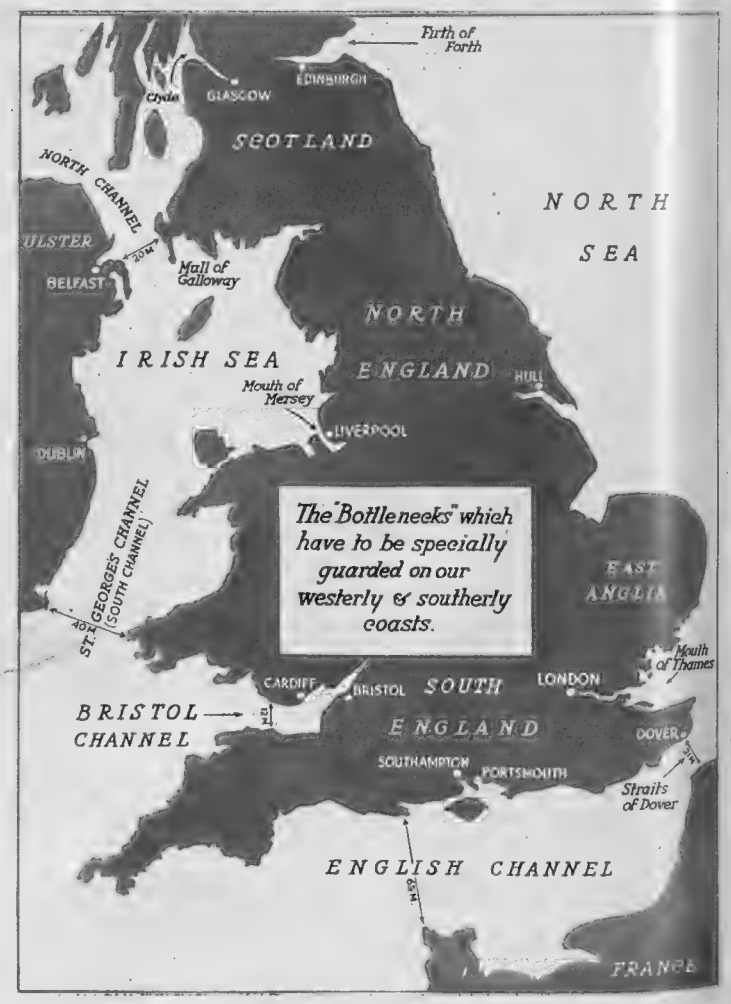
Nearly all the principal British ports are approached through bottlenecks, which are of far greater advantage to the attack than they are to the defence, although they naturally permit the concentration of our small craft. The conspicuous exception is Glasgow, but even in that case ships are collected for the long run up the Firth, which is within easy reach of the raiding planes which Germany is using so much.

The West Coast ports facing the Irish Sea can only be approached by the narrow North Channel between Ulster and the Mull of Galloway, and the much wider St. George's Channel from the south. The North Channel is deep and has a very strong current, so that it presents difficulties to minelaying and also to the fixing of permanent obstructions, but the U-boats learned to dread it during the late war.

The South Channel is an area in which heavy seas are to be expected, like all funnels, and if the ships hug the coast of Eire it is very certain that full information about them is sent to Germany by agents in neutral territory. It is also within easy flying distance of the big airfields in Brittany, the pilots knowing that they may reasonably expect to find a concentration of ships entering or leaving the



THE NORTH CHANNEL BETWEEN IRELAND AND SCOTLAND: At its narrowest point—between Kintyre and the Irish coast—the channel is only 16 miles wide. It is deep, with a very strong current, so that it is not easy to mine. This channel is under constant patrol by vessels of the Royal Navy



THE TWO BOTTLENECKS LEADING TO THE IRISH SEA: At the south is a 40-mile-wide channel, and at the north a much smaller one. Together these channels protect the west coast ports of Britain. Farther south is the 65-mile stretch from the English coast to Cherbourg; and, of course, to the east lie the Straits of Dover, commanded by the guns of both sides

Mersey and Bristol Channel, or, if there happen to be no ships which they can attack with bombs or torpedoes, they can lay mines.

The naval bases and airfields in the same occupied territory cover the "Chops of the Channel," which was the favourite cruising ground of the old-time privateers, and this apparently is the reason for the many enemy air raids on the Plymouth base, which is as useful and hard-worked as it was in Elizabeth's day. The whole length of the English Channel is, in fact, a danger area to merchant ships. The motor torpedo-boats, popularly but erroneously known as E-boats, can use the innumerable French fishing ports beloved by artists in peacetime, while the bigger French harbours are fully equipped as bases for German submarines, and their possession permits the enemy to use the smaller types of U-boat, whose small fuel capacity is a minor point when they can lie in wait for their victims only a few hours out of their base.

In the narrow Straits of Dover the long-range guns which have been mounted on the French coast, particularly at Boulogne and round Cape Gris Nez, are constantly firing at convoys. A gun that will carry across the Channel has been the dream of both the British and the French for centuries, and the famous "Queen Elizabeth's Pocket Pistol," preserved at Dover Castle, was long believed to be capable of firing its ball on to Calais Green, although actually five miles was about its maximum range.

Both the British and German communiqués show how often these long-range guns are used against convoys, but they produce astonishingly little result. At twenty miles range the county of Kent is an easy enough target which cannot be missed, but a merchant ship, or even a long string of merchant ships, is quite a different proposition, and the Germans' aim is still further put out by the great efficiency of the British smoke screens, laid by the men-of-war.

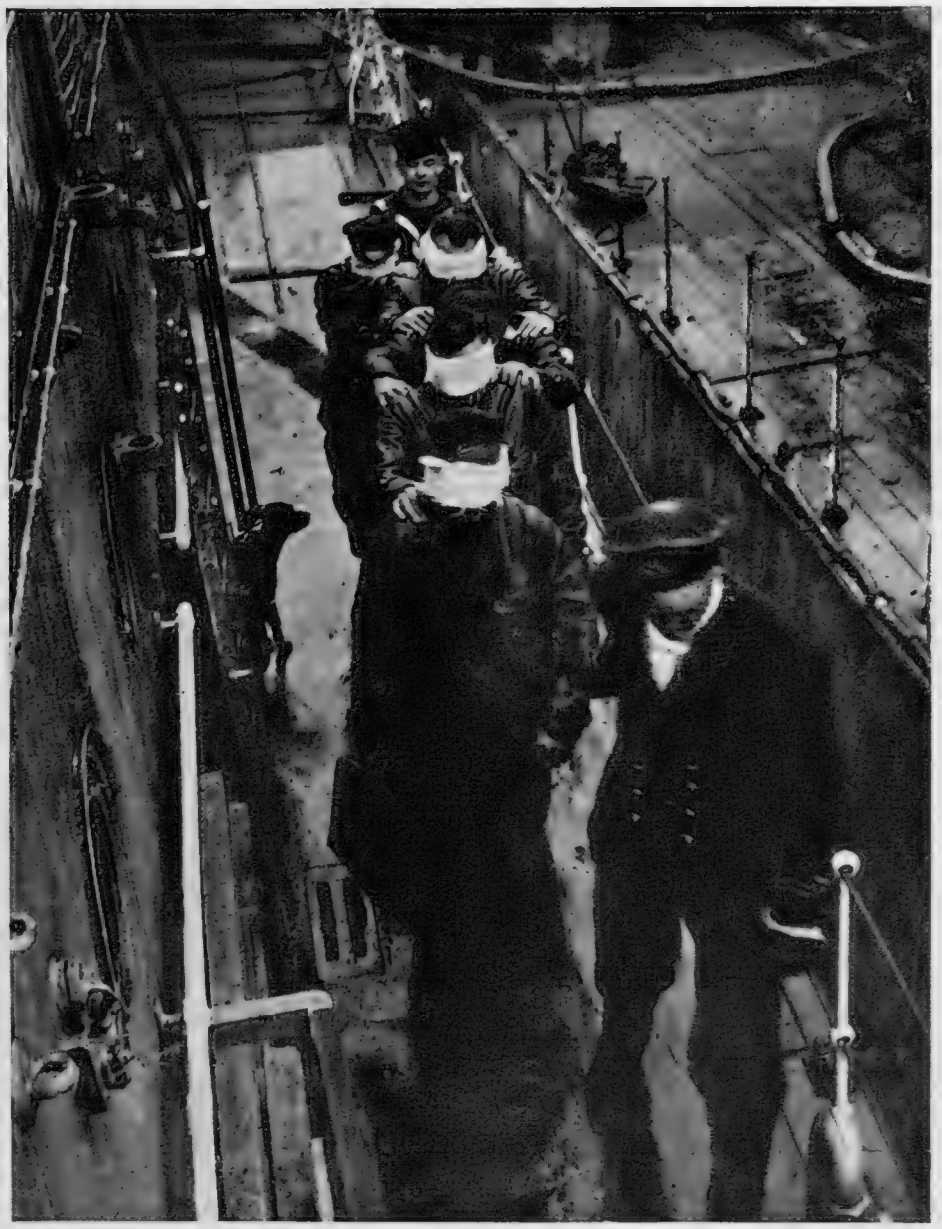
The story goes that one literary-minded destroyer captain, who knew his *Ingoldsby Legends*, semaphored when he had got his charge to safety :—

> "Never was heard such a terrible curse,
> But what gave rise
> To no little surprise
> Nobody seemed one penny the worse."

which is a signal which certainly never appeared in his official log.

Merchant ships passing up and down the Channel also receive a lot of protection against these batteries from our own long-range guns mounted on the Kent coast. Comparatively little appears in the communiqués about the splendid work done by these guns, but the German artillerists have a great respect for them, and this respect, coupled with the necessity of constantly keeping their guns on the move along their railway lines, throws out their aim badly.

The whole seaway from Land's End to the East Scottish coast is, it must be remembered, constantly under air attack, and ships expect to be assailed with torpedoes, bombs, cannon shells, and machine-guns, until such attacks are now taken as being part of the day's work. Only a certain proportion of the shipping bound for the London River and East Coast ports passes through the Channel; other ships go round the North of Scotland and down the North Sea, their swept channel being kept tolerably safe from attacks by submarines and surface men-of-war by the elaborate minefields which were laid, and properly notified according to International Law, in the early days of the struggle. Minefields cannot save them from constant air attack, but the Navy is always there ready to carry out defensive work with small craft, from destroyers downwards, which is beyond all praise. The Admiralty very frequently announces triumphs of the trawlers, drifters and other kind of small craft in bringing down enemy planes, but there are numerous actions which go unrecorded.



CAPTURED IN THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC : These German sailors were picked up and taken prisoners when their ship was sunk by the Royal Navy. They are here seen being led ashore from a destroyer at a British port. In order that they should not notice details of the naval base which might prove useful should any of the men escape later, they were all blindfolded before being brought ashore. Many of them—duped by German propaganda—believed that this was the prelude to being shot!

IN THE SOUTHERN BOTTLENECK, OR ST. GEORGE'S CHANNEL : Destroyers and motor craft watch the approaches to the Severn Estuary and the ports of Cardiff, Bristol, etc. Within the northern and southern bottlenecks is the whole area of the Irish Sea—*Drawing by W. G. Whitaker*

THE DRIVE TO DISLOCATE NAZI TRANSPORT

Unseen by Most of Us, Germany's Communications in All Directions are Being Disrupted by the Present Offensive of the R.A.F. How this is Affecting the Enemy's Colossal War Effort is Here Described

By FERDINAND TUOHY

"EVERY [German] move up and down across Europe and into Asia and Africa," Mr. Roosevelt reminds, "has been conducted according to a time schedule, utilising in every case an overwhelming superiority, not only in material, but in trained men. Each campaign has been based on a preliminary assurance of safety to the intended victim." The same thing, as we know, happened in the case of Russia, the Germans creeping up unmolested and lying low until zero second struck.

Just think of the enormous preparations this latest creeping up entailed. The vast accumulations of material close to the Soviet frontier, the construction of airfields and of imperative ground installations for the *Luftwaffe*, the depots of oil and petrol and arms and ammunition, the special road-building, the Panzer repair and upkeep arrangements, the hospital and stores and rationing schedules—all done under cover and unmolested; the Nazi rail, road and water transport systems able to function genuinely "like clockwork" up to zero second.

The value of the R.A.F.'s present offensive against all forms of Nazi transport they can get at cannot, therefore, be overestimated. Britain is not going to allow the Nazis to do another creeping stunt back to the west, if she can help it. As the Germans have no hope of creeping back under promise of being kind and indulgent towards this country, they will have to do their creeping in the face of every form of obstruction and dislocation of their several transport systems that can be contrived by ourselves, acting in conjunction with the peoples of the captive states. It is nothing less than a big push to tie the Nazis in a tangle that lies open to the "V" lands in the immediate days and weeks ahead. Stop Hitler returning to the west in anything like the swift and ordered manner he would like to, and his plans for the invasion of Britain are correspondingly put out of gear, and the more that happens, the greater the celerity with which Nazi hopes must descend.

ONE OF THE INSTRUMENTS IN THE DRIVE AGAINST GERMANY: The powerful American-built aircraft known as the Liberator, now being flown across the Atlantic for the R.A.F. This particular aeroplane was brought across by an Anglo-Canadian-American crew: landfall was made in just over eight hours. Further pictures, showing the interior of one of these aircraft during an actual transatlantic flight, are given on p. 148 of this issue

The very magnitude of Hitler's conquests has produced a transport problem fully capable of defying the greatest German organising brains. In peacetime Europe kept going on four major forms of transport: sea, rail, road and canal. Very well, let us see what has happened—

No fewer than nine countries which were accustomed to obtain most of their vital supplies from overseas are now practically severed from this approach. That means that Italy, Holland, Belgium, Norway, Denmark, France, Greece, Yugoslavia and Rumania find themselves almost wholly dependent on Europe's railways, roads and inland water transport for supplies of those goods they require, not only to exist themselves, but for purposes of feeding the German war-machine, if feed this under duress they still must do.

By coming into the war, Italy was the first to produce a bottle-neck in the Axis transport system. Over four-fifths of Italy's imports used normally to reach her by sea. To-day, apart from such supplies as she can obtain across the Adriatic, along the French Mediterranean coast, and—very perilously—through the Ægean, all Italy's imports must come to her over the dozen railway lines that connect her with the outside world. The Axis surmounted this situation in part by grabbing the maximum possible of railway transport from Vichy, and by causing French factories to concentrate on railway material. Sweden and Switzerland have been other helps. Yet the Italian transport problem remains a constant drag on Axis mobility and maybe it can be made more so.

Except as regards oil and coal fuel, France has never been as dependent as Italy on outside commodities. Moreover, we have allowed quite a lot into France, notably phosphates and non-ferrous metals. Nevertheless, if Hitler counts on tethering French industry to his war-machine, he has got to provide oil and coal for France, perhaps from as far away as Silesia and Rumania, meaning further considerable trans-Continental carriage.

Denmark and Holland must have masses of fodder and fertilisers if they are to continue as the giant "food factories" for which they're cast in or out of the New Order.

In the recently-conquered Balkan Peninsula, Germany has a severe transport job on hand, trying to get the raw materials she needs principally from Yugoslavia and Rumania, a problem which is complicated by the Nazis having to maintain adequate lines of communication with their forces south of the Danube. In fact, one might not be far out in tabulating Germany's general transport problem under the following heads:—

Supplying the requirements—not locally provided—of a German army of six or seven million men strung out from Bayonne to Smolensk;

Supplying war industries with raw materials and the Axis populations with food;

Compensating for Italy's almost total loss of maritime imports;

Transporting to "Greater Germany" the fuel, food and other raw materials from the conquered Balkans, which formerly were carried through the Mediterranean;

Maintaining a flow of materials for industry and agriculture in the occupied territories in order that these may aid the German war effort;

Keeping the way sufficiently clear to enable the bulk of the German Army to be transferred from one part of Europe to another.

Germany herself must be the centre of this mammoth traffic, and we know in the first place that the Nazis greatly neglected their railway system in favour of a flamboyant *autobahn* network. If all is going to plan, track and rolling-stock should be greatly improved by 1943. But has the set programme been realisable in the midst of a war, and a bombing one at that? However, the Nazis have plundered freight cars in tens of thousands.

With regard to the motorways, the extent to which they are being used is governed by the fuel factor. They were never built to cope with a transport problem such as the Hitler conquests have brought forth. The *autobahn* sprang from the needs of a mechanised army dashing to and fro at speed.

The third major means of transport, by inland waterway, has steadily forged ahead in importance beside the two foregoing. Barges can carry much larger loads considerably more cheaply, and the German and Central European river and canal network was in latter years prodigiously developed. The fullest possible use of it is currently being made, but the strain will be an ever-mounting one. As an instance, Hitler is known to be shifting as much of his war industry as possible from west to east—say, from the Ruhr to Silesia. In that case, he will have to transport his finished war material across Germany back to the western theatre, and that will mean increased reliance on barge transport—with the R.A.F. paying ever greater attention thereto.

The fourth and last means left to Germany in the unravelling of her transport tangle takes her on to the seaways, and we know what has been happening about that: 200,000 tons of Axis shipping destroyed in a recent period of eight days, and the German and occupied ports bombed relentlessly with the effect that, aside from the destruction of shipping lying in these places—Bremen, Rotterdam, Kiel, Brest, and so on—the quays are so damaged that ships must discharge by lighter, with resultant heavy delays. Germany is obviously striving to run the gauntlet of the North Sea and English Channel in order to replenish her garrisons and air and sea raiders in the Low Countries and France, and therefore anything we can do to stop her diminishes her chance of successfully invading Britain and accordingly brings victory nearer.

But there is no reason why we shouldn't envisage the big push against Germany's transport system on a broader level of possibility than the situation as it affects these islands only. The Red Air Force has been knocking spots off Danubian ports and barges, while the bombing of Ploesti oilfields might well lame Hitler a few months ahead should he be unable to reach Baku. In the Baltic the Germans have likewise been losing transport sinews, and in the Ægean and Mediterranean Axis maritime losses show a steady increase.

Bearing the brunt of the assault on Germany's communications are to be found the R.A.F. and the Fleet Air Arm. Their pounding will augment as the propitious moment for the big attempted dislocation draws nigh. Meanwhile, it is well to bear in mind that the Germans have already concentrated such defensive fire at the more vital spots, that it is almost a V.C. affair finding one's target from a really useful height. This applies in particular to such areas as the Dortmund-Ems strip of canal linking the waterways of Eastern and Western Germany, and to the inland ports of Duisburg-Ruhrort and that of Berlin itself.

One fully expects to see the assault on inland waterways intensified and where friendly towns in occupied territory are concerned, there will be nothing for it but to warn the inhabitants in advance. The bombing of rail terminals and junctions and of "nodal" points on the main roads is also bound to be accentuated, though here we know from our own experience how rapidly repairs can be effected. In other words, the big push towards dislocation requires timing in relation to the run of the war. Here, one imagines, the "V" campaign might be turned to account; indeed, one sees few others more capable of helping our bombing crews in the work of dislocation than the "V" crusaders abroad. Let me quickly add that I see small use for "V" crusaders at home. The "V" campaign might also with advantage be kept free of religious quotation. Many of the potentially best "V" workers "over there" are Communists who do not have the Bible around; while others, who may practise religious worship, might jib at the Bible being quoted from a Protestant land as part of the rescue campaign. However——

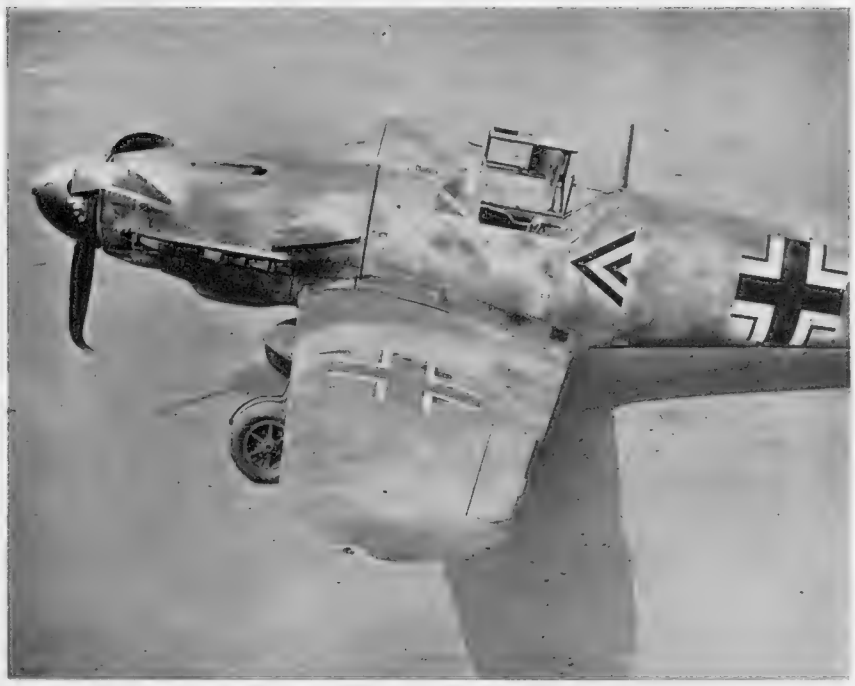
One does not see the "V" crusaders sabotaging right and left all of a sudden, dynamiting Gestapo H.Q. in the Rue de Rivoli, bumping off French admirals, sending Mussolini's power-stations shooting in debris to the sky, bringing the Hohenzollern Bridge crashing into the Rhine, wrecking the port installations of Antwerp, firing the Briey Basin. No. The "V" campaign could be a first-rate help if and when British troops land again on the Continent—it could be the sign for all over there to strike for those troops as civilians never struck before—and meanwhile it might be made to serve in conjunction with an assault such as that now getting under way on the far-flung transport system of the Nazis.

Why not give precise indications of the kind of work that can be currently helpful? Such as the preparation of sabotage attacks on Nazi communications? These things have to be prepared in advance, and we require first to get the "V" crusaders over there into the right frame of mind. I have been speaking with someone who has been four times secretly on the Continent, and it is his suggestion that part of the "V" campaign should be directed at the proper moment against the composite Nazi transport system wherever this can be attained.

GERMANY'S VERY LATEST AIRCRAFT

The Recently Captured Messerschmitt Me. 109 F/2

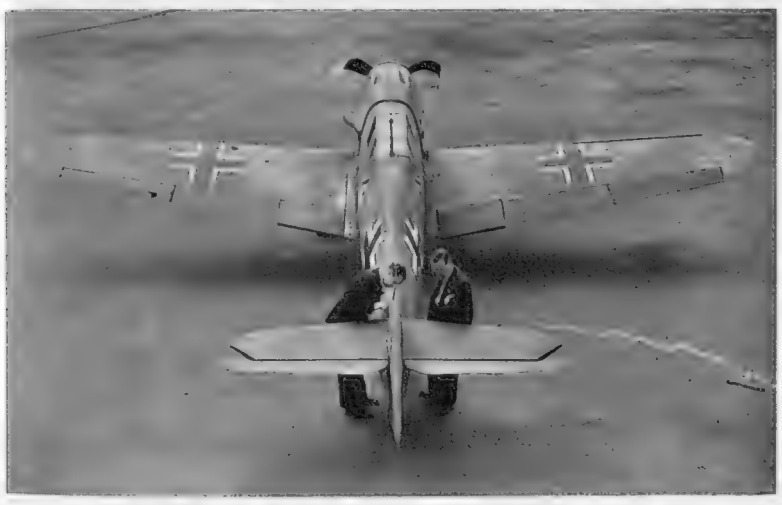
A FRONT VIEW OF THE CAPTURED AIRCRAFT: The cannon gun fires through the airscrew hub, and the wheels retract outwards into the wing



THE COCKPIT OF THE ME. 109 F/2: Showing one of the two machine-gun apertures in the engine cover, and also the rounded wing-tips

Experts of the Ministry of Aircraft Production have now examined the latest type of German fighter, the Messerschmitt Me. 109 F/2, fitted with a Daimler-Benz 601/N engine. This aircraft was "presented" to Britain early in July in the circumstances related below. The experts consider it to be a good aircraft: compared with the earlier 109 types it marks a considerable advance in terms of speed and altitude. Its speed is equal to that of the latest Spitfire, and it has been designed for high-altitude flying, with a ceiling of 41,000 ft. It has rounded wing-tips for greater wing area somewhat similar to those of the Hurricane. The earlier Messerschmitts had square tips. Its armament consists of two machine-guns and one shell gun with a high rate of fire mounted in the hub of the airscrew. The R.A.F. have already proved themselves to be the master of this latest German type

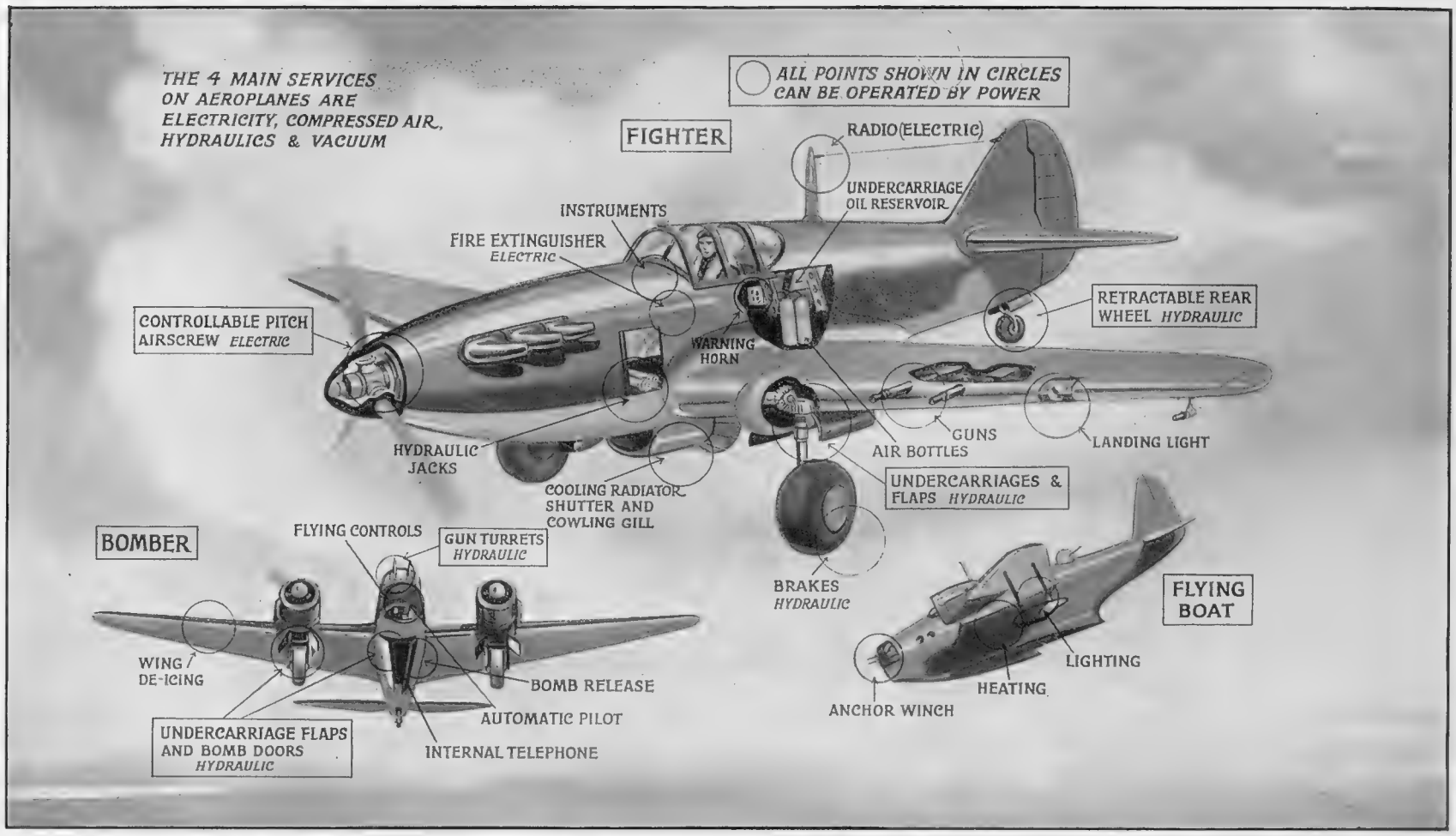
THE CAPTURED MESSERSCHMITT UNDER EXAMINATION BY EXPERTS OF THE MINISTRY OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION: Note the angle of the wheels in relation to the ground



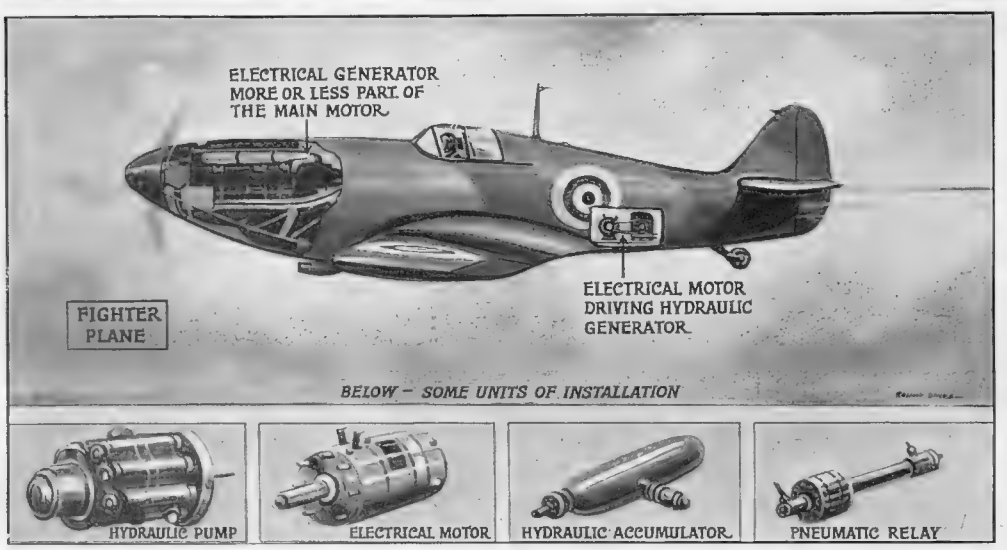
A REAR VIEW OF THE CAPTURED MESSERSCHMITT ME. 109 F/2

HOW CAPTAIN PINGEL'S LATEST TYPE AIRCRAFT LANDED AT ST. MARGARET'S BAY IN THE EARLY DAYS OF JULY: The pilot managed to escape from the crash, but was held up by a passing motorist armed with a car starting-handle! He was then handed over to two soldiers

On July 10 the R.A.F. were presented by a German pilot with a brand-new and practically undamaged Me. 109 F/2, the very latest type of aircraft possessed by the *Luftwaffe*. The pilot was Captain Rolf Peter Pingel, a Nazi "ace" who was compelled to make a forced landing in Kent. It was at first stated that his capture was due to a British heavy bomber, which was said to have forced him down near St. Margaret's Bay, but Pingel himself declared later that he was forced down by two Spitfires The pilot was uninjured and attempted to escape, but two soldiers took him prisoner. On the aircraft were twenty-two red lions, indicating that Pingel claimed that number of victories over the R.A.F. The Me. 109 F/2 was the first of the new type to fall intact into our hands: the only apparent damage it suffered in landing was a bent propeller and a torn cowling. Incidentally, Pingel was the fourth Nazi ace pilot whose fate has been publicised in Germany



ANCILLARY SERVICES FOR AIRCRAFT—Showing the various services on an aeroplane which are worked automatically by power, but not directly by the engine itself : The four main services on modern aircraft are electricity, compressed air, hydraulic power and vacuum. This drawing shows the various points which are controlled by these means on a modern flying-boat. It will readily be appreciated that the amount of control work done by these four services is very considerable indeed



A SUGGESTION FOR FIGHTER AIRCRAFT : It has been suggested that all ancillary services in British fighter aircraft should be driven from one unit which is separate from the main engine. This unit would probably be all-electric and would be situated in the tail of the aircraft, where there would be plenty of space for it and for its complicated connections. The scheme shown in this diagram would be a good compromise

FIGHTING AIRCRAFT

Some Suggestions for Operating their Important Ancillary Services

—With Sketches by ROLAND DAVIES

It is, of course, not unlikely that as aircraft are developed further, there will be more and heavier demands made by the ancillary services. These demands will only be met by even bigger and heavier installations. Consequently, a separation from the main engines for these additional tasks is something which aircraft designers of the near future will have to study

THE advancement of aircraft design, especially in regard to modern warplanes, has resulted in the introduction of a number of power services which do not derive their energy directly from the main engines of the aircraft.

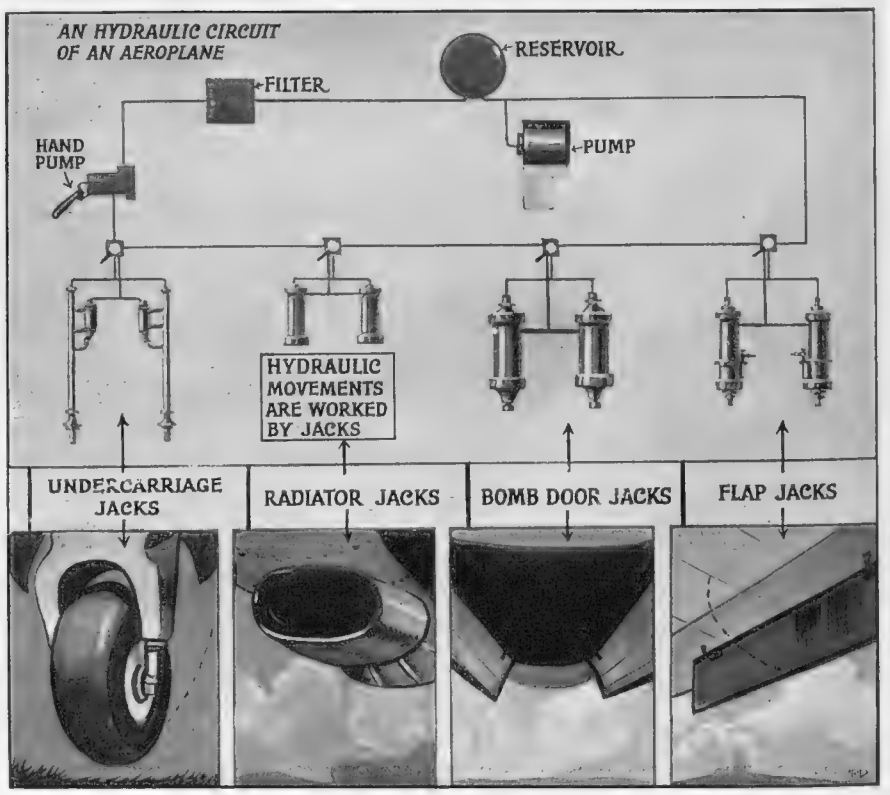
When an aeroplane takes off, its wheels are lifted and stowed away—in some cases doors are fitted to close over them; the gun turrets are made to turn when required; and bomb doors open and close as the pilot, or bomb-aimer, wills. These are, however, but a few of the many operations which are performed by ancillary power services. The four main services which are employed in a modern aircraft for the operation of these important functions are electric, hydraulic, compressed air and vacuum.

There are many aircraft designers who believe that all these subsidiary services could best be worked by only one power—such as electricity. Other designers insist that nothing could supersede hydraulic power for such purposes as turning the gun turrets and operating the undercarriage. The ideal arrangement is, of course, to operate as many services as possible from one power source.

The champions of the hydraulic idea declare that electric motors are heavier than hydraulic jacks: furthermore, a hydraulic piston or jack is quicker to stop than an electric motor. With regard to the employment of compressed air, one of the main duties of this would be for charging the air-bottle for the operation of the brakes.

A suggested solution to many problems would be a separate power unit independent of the main motor—this might take the form of a petrol motor coupled both to an electric and hydraulic generator. An entirely independent power unit, separate from the main engine, has already been applied to certain aircraft in the United States.

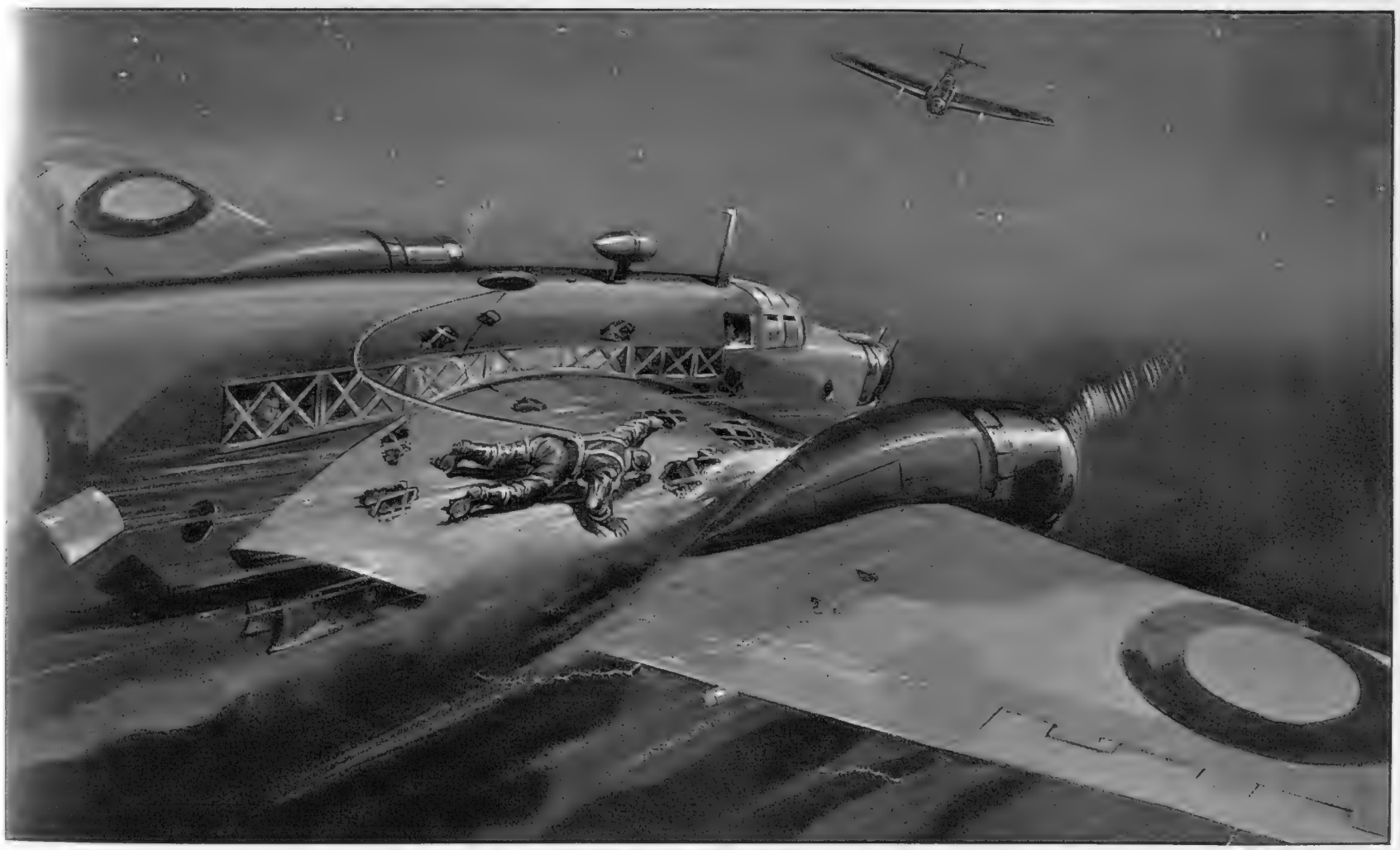
Very big aeroplanes could be fitted quite easily with a separate unit; but the added weight and space would cause all sorts of intricate problems in the case of small planes. A suggested compromise is indicated in one of the drawings reproduced here. Some of the giant aircraft now being constructed in this country will, when completed, carry almost half a ton of hydraulic equipment, comprising five independent hydraulic systems! Incidentally, the most frequent hydraulic pressure used on modern aircraft is 1,200-1,400 lb. per square inch.



A HYDRAULIC CIRCUIT FOR A BOMBER AIRCRAFT : The advantages of this system as applied to a bomber would be a high degree of standardisation; the emergency lowering apparatus, simply incorporated, could be operated continuously without overheating; there would be no risk of fire as might be the case with burnt-out electricity cables

WONDERFUL RECORD BY THE "MADRAS" SQUADRON OF THE R.A.F.: Fourteen raiders shot down at night by the same Squadron which had previously also held the record of thirty-seven enemy aircraft destroyed in one day—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

"Madras" Fighter Squadron operate a number of Defiant aircraft which were subscribed for the people of the Residency of Madras. The Commanding Officer of the Squadron has just a message to the Governor of Madras telling him how much the pilots enjoy flying these raft. Up to mid-July the Madras Squadron had destroyed no fewer than fourteen night raiders, previous to this they had held the daytime record of thirty-seven enemy aircraft destroyed in one day. The C.O. declares that his pilots "will not be happy until we also hold the record for shooting down most enemy bombers at night." The Defiant, we might recall, is fitted with a turret amidships which can fire broadside at the enemy: when first it was introduced into the R.A.F. it caused devastation amongst its opponents of the *Luftwaffe*. In the drawing by Mr. Davies above its principal method of attack is demonstrated



OUT ON A BOMBER'S WING IN A GALE OVER THE ZUIDER ZEE TO PUT OUT A FIRE: The amazing feat of the second pilot of a Wellington bomber after the aircraft had been damaged by a Nazi fighter at the conclusion of a bombing raid over Germany—*Drawing by Roland Davies*

The amazing feat illustrated above took place during a flight by a Wellington bomber which had taken part in the bombing of Munster. During the return flight the British aircraft was attacked by a Messerschmitt fighter whilst over the Zuider Zee at 13,000 ft. Raked by cannon fire and with flames gushing from the petrol feed pipes, the second pilot climbed out on to a wing to put out the fire. The Nazi, in his second attempt to bring down the bomber, was himself shot down by the Wellington's rear-gunner. The crew knocked a hole through the side of the fuselage and tried to reach the fire with extinguishers, but the fluid was blown away by the wind. The second pilot—a New Zealander—then decided to climb out and try to smother the flames with the cockpit cover. A rope was tied round his waist and he climbed out of the astro hatch. He kicked holes down the side of the fuselage for foothold, and managed to get down flat on to the wing. His parachute he wore on his chest. The wind was so terrific that the cover was blown out of the hole. Over the North Sea the crew jettisoned all they dared, and they took one and a half hours on the crossing. Ten miles off the coast of England the wing blazed up furiously and burnt more holes in the fabric—and then quite suddenly died out!

The World of Books—By Vernon Fane

THE STORYTELLERS HOLD COURT

Virginia Woolf's Last Novel; E. M. Delafield's Family Saga; A Napoleonic Refugee; Divorce-Court and Other Reminiscences

ALMOST anybody will admit that Virginia Woolf's last book, *The Years*, was not easy to read on first sight, though the kind of reader who would be unprepared to make the effort would be denying himself much æsthetic and intellectual excitement and enjoyment. With some surprise, therefore, we find that Mrs. Woolf in her latest (and, alas! her last) novel, BETWEEN THE ACTS (Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.), concedes the classic form of plot and technique which she has not consented to do since *Orlando*.

It all takes place on a summer's day, and the action mainly concerns the performance of a local pageant. The story opens before luncheon, in the house of the family in the grounds of whose house it takes place. Isa, brushing her hair, and anticipating the arrival of her city-working husband for the week-end, catching glimpses of the children on the terrace, is reflecting on the pride and affection of the old *cliché* "the father of my children," and at the same time aware of her impending meeting with the gentleman farmer who was somehow mixed with these thoughts.

The older generation, Bartholomew, and Mrs. Swithin, had their own reactions, and especially to the picnicking Mrs. Manresa (who brought her own champagne) and her supercilious companion, William Dodge. The pageant itself is a symbolic progress by tableaux from Chaucer through the Elizabethan age, through an amusing parody of eighteenth-century artificialities, progressing to the stolid exaltations of the Victorian era and so to the immediate pre-war scene, embodying the symbolism of a broken civilisation, and finally the inrush of youth, who dance about and make a noise, and hold up looking-glasses to the audience.

The finale is in the form of a magnificent soliloquy by the pageant's producer, Miss La Trobe, who speaks in accents which seem to come from the very soul of the author herself.

Such is the story, and it is easily read. But not so easy, except by careful and patient attention, are the interwoven subtleties and flights of fancy with which it is enriched. There are passages of exquisite beauty, of lovely prose, of enchanting wit, of sombre thought, of hope, of pity, of despair, and, above all, a delightful sense of fun.

I see that Mrs. Woolf has been taken to task by a popular critic for being withdrawn from, and having no contact with, what he calls "reality." If this book has no reality in it, then there must be millions who do not know the meaning of the word. One thought it does provoke is that, assuming it is a work of art, and great art at that, it is an intensely feminine book, and in that sense a triumph. It sums up all that men have ever meant when they have talked about woman's intuitiveness. On that plane it is brightly remote from anything ever achieved in literature, though not beyond the sympathy and understanding which command rightful homage.

With Miss E. M. Delafield we are on the sure ground of competence and assured technique. She has a story to tell, and the pleasant intention of using a touch of fantasy and coincidence in order to give it what I suppose the critic mentioned above would call reality. NO ONE NOW WILL KNOW (Macmillan. 8s. 6d.) opens with a party of people in a train passing through Nice. One of them discovers that there was a great-uncle buried thereabouts, who was also the grandfather of two others in the party. Well—perhaps they are not quite so sure, so the author whisks us back to 1910, and later to the year 1872, in order, for our pleasure, to unravel the mystery.

The scene shifts to Barbados, and quickly back to Devonshire, where the eleven-year-old Callie Lempriere could never be quite sure about her parents, and was happy enough not to be worried about anything in particular until the news came that her father was dead. Back we go in time again to Rosalie's girlhood in South Wales and the rivalry of two brothers who are in love with her, and the jealousy of sister Kate. The sister's fate is the cause of Lucy's enforced exile, and it is upon the waywardness of her character from which most of the action of the story springs and depends.

It is a novel that does not pretend to go any deeper than the telling of a piece of family history by reversing it through the album, but at the same time it is very lively, competent, and eminently readable.

Miss D. K. Broster, who enjoys considerable popularity over the Border for her Scottish historical romances, has in THE SEA WITHOUT A HAVEN (Heinemann. 8s. 6d.) forsaken for once the mountains and glens, but not the historical scene.

In 1793 Napoleon bombarded Toulon, and the English and Allied ships withdrew, together with many of the Royalist rebels. Among these refugees was Charlotte-Désirée d'Esparre, who, in order to get away safely, was forced into marriage with a middle-aged Creole planter from Louisiana. The wretched man, however, was to die almost immediately on the quayside, and the hunted and friendless Charlotte found herself sailing in Hood's flagship, the *Victory*, to Leghorn. Dumped off in that none too savoury port, she was forced to find employment as a maid to the horrid wife of a prosperous English merchant, and as governess to her revolting Arabella. Things are about as bad as they could be for the wretched Charlotte, until the gallant Captain Nugent Carew and his frigate put in to Leghorn, and he is able afterwards to rescue her from the Island of Farfaletta, off the Corsican coast.

The story moves smoothly and easily to a romantic conclusion, and lacks nothing of the colour, action and attention to historical detail necessary to such yarns.

THREE CUPS OF COFFEE (Dacres. 8s. 6d.) is a modern story with a moral. Miss Ruth Feiner takes her title from the fact that three women drink three cups of coffee on leaving the Law Courts after a divorce case. One of them is the man's wife, the second is an ex-mistress, and the third is a young woman who, though innocent, has been compelled to play the role of co-respondent. Each of these tells her story, and none of them minces any words about the man in the case. The moral seems to be that men of this sort should be careful never to let their women meet either over cups of coffee or within hearing of a novelist of the ability of Miss Ruth Feiner.

DRAWN FROM LIFE (Collins. 12s. 6d.) is a book of reminiscences by Miss Stella Bowen, who is an artist of some international repute, and who thoughtfully embellishes her story with reproductions of some of her canvases.

She was born in Adelaide, Australia, and arrived in England on her first visit to Europe in the spring of 1914. Very soon she was in contact with the literary and artistic world, and her story begins to contain anecdotes of such different characters as Ezra Pound, T. S. Eliot, W. B. Yeats, Francis Meynell, Mary Butts, Edith Sitwell, Arthur Waley, Raymond and Margaret Postgate, G. D. H. Cole and Daisy Lansbury. Chelsea, the Café Royal, and all the appurtenances of such an introduction in such a world are there. Then came the period when she was swept off her feet by Ford Madox Ford, and, in the years which followed, lived happily in the South of France and in Paris. What with one thing and another, she arrived at the year 1927, desperately needing a change and even more desperately needing the wherewithal to live. So she went to America and painted all sorts of people, including Dorothy Thompson and her small son. It was "the nicest job I had whilst in America. I did not resent the fact that she and Red seemed to have a great deal of money, because they had earned it all by the sweat of their own brains." The other brain-sweater in this case was Sinclair Lewis. She earned enough to return to France, but not enough to be able to stay there. She had to come back to London, although "I was in no mood for London's pink sun, nor for the slow and heavy tempo of London streets and London conversation." Over here, she looked for "some comradeship of interests and beliefs. I never found it . . . in the interests of general conversation you toss off a remark. In Paris or in New York the ball is quickly thrown back. In London it crashes to the ground, where it lies looking like a suet pudding under the cold and silent eyes of the company. Agony!"

And so on, to "the story of the years which led us from Kensington to Hampstead, and from Hampstead to the lovely cottage where we now sit waiting for the German invasion, is neither important nor interesting." Which, to say the least, is hardly a constructive attitude.

MISS DOROTHY THOMPSON ARRIVES IN ENGLAND: Miss Thompson has come to Britain from America, by way of Lisbon. Wife of Mr. Sinclair Lewis, the famous novelist, she is one of Hitler's greatest scourges in the Press and on the radio. Without doubt she is our most powerful woman ally in the United States, and her belief in the victory of our cause has never wavered. She is now in England to see the war at first hand, and is here seen being questioned by newspaper reporters on arrival. Whatever she has to report on conditions in England to her vast public in the United States will certainly be read by the many thousands of her followers

HELPING THE WARTIME DEBTOR: A big oblong piece of cardboard announces to the world in large lettering that a spacious Georgian mansion in Bedford Square has now become a Liabilities (Wartime Adjustment) Office. It has been announcing this fact since July 1, when the Act designed to assist the debtor who, owing to war conditions, is unable to meet his liabilities came into effect. Within sits Mr. D. Freeman Coutts: he was previously Registrar of the West London County Court, but he has now been seconded for duty as Chief Liability Adjustment Officer of the London area, which embraces sixty-one County Court districts

CIVILIAN CLOTHIER: The President of the Board of Trade has appointed Mr. Metford Watkins, a member of the Export Council of the Board of Trade, to be Director-General of Civilian Clothing. He will deal with questions arising on the supply and distribution of civilian clothing and on the operation of Board of Trade measures affecting the clothing industries, including Rationing, Limitation of Supplies, and concentration of Production. Mr. Watkins is chairman of the Retailers' Advisory Committee and the Trade Suppliers' Advisory Committee, which have been advising the Board of Trade on problems arising out of the Consumer Rationing Order

"Both Schweppes, sir"

UNIFORM ACHIEVEMENT

From the precision of its lines, to the disciplined threads of the last buttonhole, each uniform we make carries in it traditions and standards worthy of the Service to which it belongs. Add the greatcoat—and such important details as badges, insignia, socks, collar, tie and cap—and you will agree that ours *is* a total war service—

AUSTIN REED

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Aldershot, Bath, Belfast, Birmingham, Bournemouth, Bristol, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Hull, Leeds, Manchester, Norwich, Nottingham, Oxford, Sheffield, Southampton.

LONDON'S WARTIME THEATRE

The New Ambassadors Revue; Shakespearean Patriotism at the Westminster; Quiet Week-end *at Wyndham's*

Reviewed by PHILIP PAGE

IF there is not, perhaps, as much as there might be of this show, *The New Ambassadors Revue*, which could with truth be labelled new, it is unquestionably a revue and at the Ambassadors Theatre. Yet how is your author—or authors (for in this case there seems to be a whole platoon of them)—of any revue to find really fresh territory? "Keep away from the war" is a general desire and a wise one, and here it is obeyed on the whole, with, as an exception, a ballet in which the local Robert Helpmann is dressed in the uniform of an officer in some Scottish regiment (though without the kilt) and the *corps de ballet* as W.A.A.F.s or something of the sort. There are precious few non-war themes left which have not already been used. So we had our old friend, the burlesque of opera, given a novel twist and a funny one—opera as it might be with words only and no music. I can think of operas—e.g., Charpentier's *Louise* and Debussy's *Pelleas and Melisande*—whose libretto is far from nonsensical; but possibly this is being a bit captious, and it is a fact, of which Mr. Ernest Thesiger, Mr. Charles Hawtrey and Miss Madge Elliott took full and most amazing advantage. Miss Elliott was excellent also as a Society dame, of the type we know so well, scooping in all possible publicity for her war-work. But Mr. Thesiger and Mr. Hawtrey might have been given more opportunity. Miss Joan Swinstead scored a big success with her gruff bad temper. The glamour and "oomph" department was more than adequately looked after by Miss Roberta Huby, a charming little person, and a chorus of lovelies. The brilliance of Miss Betty Ann Davies certainly does not diminish.

Bancroft once said of a famous actor's Macbeth, were those parts which were good *good enough*? And then, after too long a wait, appeared on the stage, for too short a time, Mr. Henry Ainley, our greatest Shakespearean actor—*to read a typewritten commentary!*

I will certainly give the Professor full marks for both his bravery and his patriotism. But neither proved enough in circumstances which sometimes veered from the ludicrous to the embarrassing

RECOMMENDED FOR THE WAR-WEARY: The above two pictures were taken at the first night during the actual performance of *The New Ambassadors Revue*. In the top picture Roberta Huby and Frith Banbury can just be seen behind the Corps de Ballet. In the lower picture are Ernest Thesiger and Charles Hawtrey as "The Amazons"

"THIS SCEPTRED ISLE" (*WESTMINSTER*).—The second part of this "lecture-recital" at the Westminster Theatre was headed on the programme "Patriotism is not enough." Most apt. Professor Wilson Knight has dramatised "Shakespeare's call to Great Britain in time of war," an unquestionably patriotic effort. He gave us interesting information about the plays and himself recited some of the famous speeches—as John of Gaunt, Henry V, and so on. Some of his acting (for a professor) was pretty good; other parts were not so good. But, as old Sir Squire

"QUIET WEEK-END" (*WYNDHAM'S*).—Unlike most sequels (its predecessor was *Quiet Wedding*) this is not at all disappointing. Most of the old friends turn up and their doings present no puzzle to those who have never met them before. The English have a peculiar knack of poking fun at themselves and at that very English institution, the week-end cottage, where the fire won't burn up and mos' things are in a muddle and the bath-water is tepid and nearly everyone squabbles.

This all makes amusing going, partly because it is wittily written and partly because it is admirably produced and almost perfectly acted. As the host and hostess, Mr. George Thorpe and Miss Marjorie Fielding are a triumph of casting. Mr. Frank Cellier has a more fantastic part as a J.P. after illicit salmon. Miss Glynis Johns is as pretty as a dozen peaches and quite a nice little actress. But, since she plays the part of a seventeen-year-old and is, I imagine, about that age herself, why does she talk like a girl of seven?

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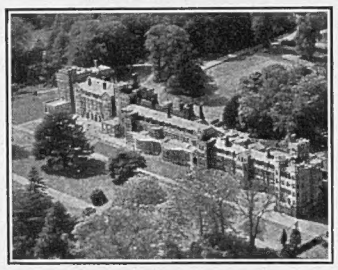

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In Quest of Good Hotels

By ASHLEY COURTENAY

"SEEING is believing." If you want to put this to the test, take the train any day, and at any time (for they run every few minutes, so there is no need to worry about a time-table), and in about seventeen minutes you will arrive at East Croydon Station. Then, by taxi or bus, you can, in not more than ten minutes, arrive at the arched gateway to the grounds of Waldronhyrst Hotel, and, hey presto! without the aid of any magician's wand, you can believe yourself to be in the heart of the country.

You may be as incredulous as I was, because for the uninitiated Croydon suggests an area built up and possibly "blitzed" down.

But instead of Suburbia I found—I must coin a word—Superbia. Superb for the man or woman who has need to be within half an hour of Victoria. Superb for those who seek permanent quarters in a country setting, with all the amenities of civilisation close to hand.

Waldronhyrst Hotel, which has its main entrance in Bramley Hill, South Croydon, might have, in the first instance, been built for its present purpose. In consequence it combines, with the new wing added by the present owners, all the virtues of a residence and an hotel.

Waldronhyrst must be very snug in winter, for then the large windows trap the winter sunshine, and modern heating arrangements find a firm ally in the thorough-built building. It is hard to define what constitutes a really comfortable residential hotel, but Waldronhyrst certainly falls within that category. At every turn I feel that the newcomer must be struck with the very liveable atmosphere. The lounges, like all the downstairs rooms, are comfortably furnished, bright without being bizarre, cosy without being crowded. The dining-room has the same pleasing, bright aspect as the other public rooms, and the fresh-cut, skilfully arranged flowers on each table blend with the colourful garden without.

A panelled lounge hall and main staircase contribute towards the country-house feeling. And so upstairs, to what is as important as the downstairs in a residential hotel—the bedrooms.

There were but few bedrooms vacant on the day of my visit, but the few that were had almost as liveable a look as those occupied. The essentials—hot and cold water laid on, gas or electric fire, and a neat-fitted bed-light which positively encourages reading in bed. The beds have spring or box-spring mattresses, and are such unobtrusive parts of the furniture that many of the occupied rooms I peeped into seemed more like sitting-rooms than bedrooms.

But Waldronhyrst, as I have already indicated, gathers its individuality from its country-house appeal, within and without. From all the rooms one gets vistas of its six acres of grounds, while to explore them is in the nature of a country stroll. Tennis, croquet and putting lawns about the house, and one might well be forgiven, being so near London, if one assumed that here the grounds began and ended. But these six acres are so full of interest to the garden lover that one could be excused for doubling in one's mind the actual size. There is nothing formal about the Waldronhyrst preserves, and there is no waste. Down the Bluebell Walk one descends to a Happy Valley—at any rate, that is my name for it, as I cannot recollect having seen before such a rich profusion of garden produce. Whilst soil and shelter have undoubtedly played a part in such happy growing conditions, Waldronhyrst residents are fortunate in the fact that the Waldronhyrst gardeners are prize men in the horticultural sphere. Fourteen prizes out of fifteen entries in one season is good going, and I believe that one of the contributory causes to the success of Waldronhyrst Hotel is the fact that the resident proprietors give full encouragement to their gardening staff.

Waldronhyrst has been under the same proprietorship since 1917. Its reputation for comfort has been consistently high. Many of the residents have been there for years. Others come and go, but always return, whilst as there are forty bedrooms in all, there is never that stagnant atmosphere which is germinated by the same old faces in the same old chairs.

On the score of wartime safety, I have reason to believe that Waldronhyrst Hotel is as safe to live at as most places. Remote from a definite objective, screened by mighty oaks, the house is neither target in itself nor near to any target.

In any case, Waldronhyrst has adequate air-raid protection, for if a bad "blitz" were to develop in that area, a private shelter, which is a few yards from the hotel, would withstand anything but a direct hit—and, I imagine, an extra-heavy H.E. at that.

Mr. Ashley Courtenay is always pleased to advise "Sphere" readers of hotels, both large and small, known to him personally. Letters, accompanied by a stamped, addressed envelope for reply, should be addressed to him, c/o the Editor, THE SPHERE, *Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1. Personal and telephone inquiries, however, cannot be accepted.*

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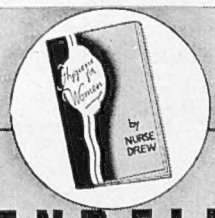

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